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New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

In the absence of the President, Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 136 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/64/631)

The Acting President: I should like, in keeping with established practice, to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/64/631, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the Assembly that 19 Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

I would like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter, a Member of the United Nations that is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of the information contained in document A/64/631?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 70 (*continued*)

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

(a) Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Draft resolutions (A/64/L.42 and A/64/L.43)

The Acting President: We meet today to consider the humanitarian situation in Haiti. More than a week after the earthquake struck Haiti, we are only beginning to realize the full extent of the loss of life and the horrendous destruction. On behalf of the President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Ali Treki, and all Member States, I would like to express my heartfelt condolences to all Haitians, as well as to the families of all United Nations staff and peacekeepers who lost their lives, who have been injured or who have seen their colleagues and friends suffer as a result of this disaster.

We recognize the sacrifice of each United Nations staff member. We pay special tribute to Special Representative Hédi Annabi, Deputy Special Representative Luiz Carlos da Costa and Acting Police Commissioner Doug Coates. Our thoughts, sympathies and support are with their families and friends at this difficult time.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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The immediate response of the international community to the earthquake was a remarkable example of solidarity with the people and the Government of Haiti. The humanitarian assistance that is being delivered is providing relief and beginning to meet some of the urgent needs of the people of Haiti, but much more needs to be done.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his leadership in ensuring a speedy response by the United Nations system. In particular, I acknowledge the efforts of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in leading the coordination of the international response to this tragic event and in launching the humanitarian appeal. I would also like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other United Nations agencies. We also appreciate the role of President Bill Clinton, Special Envoy of the United Nations to Haiti, in mobilizing international support for relief operations.

We offer our thanks to the rescue and relief teams that have come from all over the world since the first hours after the earthquake. With so much outpouring of support, public and private, we are still struggling with coordination. Obviously, more needs to be done urgently to reach those most desperately in need of water, food, medical supplies and shelter. The speedy delivery of those essential items is crucial in order to save lives and relieve suffering. I believe that, in order to be more effective, relief efforts also need to involve and mobilize Haitians themselves.

I pay tribute to the Government of Haiti, which, despite having suffered immense losses of personnel, infrastructure and resources, has been able to assist its population and to maintain order under these challenging circumstances. I would like to pay tribute to the people of Haiti, who have shown great courage, perseverance and dignity in the face of this national and personal tragedy. I am pleased that the whole membership is coming together to express its support to the Government and the people of Haiti. This is an occasion to reiterate our full commitment to the provision of immediate relief and emergency assistance to the people of Haiti.

Beyond that, it is crucial to ensure support for the even more difficult task of the long-term reconstruction and development of Haiti. It will require the sustained focus and attention of the international community in the months and years ahead. The entire United Nations system, as well as the international financial institutions and development agencies, will have a key role to play in that regard.

I believe that the example set by the United Nations and its Member States — speaking with a single voice and acting in unison in full support of Haiti, its Government and its people — reaffirms the common humanity that is the moral basis of the Organization and of the international community.

I now invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of those who lost their lives in this disaster.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General: Ten days after the earthquake in Haiti, the scale of the disaster has become clear. According to Government estimates, at least 75,000 people have been killed, 200,000 have been injured and 1 million have been displaced. But of course, we do not yet have a complete tally. Search and rescue teams — more than 50 from around the world — have spent the past week looking for survivors. At last count, they had rescued 123 people alive from the rubble. The search continues.

As many as half the buildings in parts of Port-au-Prince may have been destroyed or damaged. Towns to the south-west of the city have seen even greater destruction. Food, water, medicine and shelter are all in short supply. Three million people need help. Two million people require food assistance. One million people are homeless. The Haitian authorities have been very hard hit. Most ministries have been destroyed, as has key infrastructure, including electricity and water supplies. Schools were destroyed, as were prisons. More than 4,000 prisoners escaped from the national penitentiary in Port-au-Prince.

The United Nations itself, as we are all acutely aware, suffered its single greatest loss of life in the history of the Organization. As of yesterday, 70 United Nations staff members had perished, with 146 as yet unaccounted for. Those include many national staff members whose whereabouts we are still trying to determine, but we must expect that the death toll will continue to rise.

In responding to Haiti's immense needs, the United Nations has three priorities. The first is the humanitarian relief operation. Coordination and logistics are crucial. We must work even more closely with our partners — Governments, non-governmental organizations, relief organizations and, of course, the Haitian authorities.

The second priority is security. Without it, there can be no effective humanitarian relief effort, or basis for reconstruction. That is why I am grateful that Member States have responded so quickly to our appeal for additional police and soldiers.

The third priority is the future. In the coming weeks and months, we will need to shift from emergency response to longer-term relief and recovery. We must help the Haitian Government to reconstitute itself. We must help to restore basic services and revive the economy. And we need to turn disaster into opportunity.

Our response has been swift and we have made progress on all three objectives. Despite suffering devastating losses, United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) troops and police have cleared main roads, removed bodies and conducted patrols with the Haitian National Police, which is gradually recovering from its own losses.

As of today, the security situation in Haiti remains stable. The United Nations is playing the principal coordinating role, working with the Government of Haiti in ensuring security. Incidents of looting and unrest remain the exception, despite some news reports to the contrary. MINUSTAH's military component is closely cooperating with United States and Canadian forces. I am also grateful to troop-contributing countries from Latin America — including Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay — and from other regions for their spontaneous response to the request for additional troops and police for MINUSTAH.

I have instructed my Special Representative to ensure that all available assets are put to work in support of the humanitarian effort. Member States from all regions have also generously contributed relief supplies, sent in personnel and deployed troops.

The United States, in cooperation with the United Nations, is managing the airport. United Nations staff members from our relief agencies are helping to prioritize landing slots for humanitarian flights. The seaport of Port-au-Prince is being repaired and is operating again, at limited capacity.

A humanitarian corridor connecting the affected areas to the Dominican Republic is becoming a major staging area for assistance. We are grateful to the Dominican Republic for its great assistance. As a result, food distribution has now reached half a million people, and is being scaled up to reach 2 million people over the coming weeks.

Drinking water is reaching at least 200,000 people per day. Eighteen permanent health facilities and temporary field hospitals are now operating, as is a medical ship sent by the United States. Last Friday, a flash appeal for $575 million was launched to cover 3 million people for six months. So far, $334 million have been contributed and pledged. That includes $25 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), which would not have been possible without the 60-plus Member States that have already contributed to CERF this year.

I am proud of the United Nations response. Seldom in the face of such disaster has the international community acted in such solidarity and so quickly in the face of so many difficulties. That said, despite all our best efforts, too many people have not received the assistance they urgently need. The immediate priorities continue to be medical assistance, water, sanitation, food and shelter, as well as fuel and transportation equipment to support the relief operation. I urge Member States to make additional contributions to the flash appeal.

At the same time, we need to set our sights beyond the immediate emergency. Before the earthquake, Haiti was making progress. Thanks in large part to MINUSTAH, it was enjoying a new measure of political stability. The economy was growing and investors were coming into the country. From afar, it might look as though all that progress has been lost. But that is not so. Handled properly, this disaster may offer us an opportunity to build back better, as United Nations Special Envoy Bill Clinton has put it.

We not only need to restore Government — we need to improve governance. We not only need to rebuild the police and the justice system — we want to help them become a better police and more capable justice system. We not only need to rebuild factories — we need to create the right environment for investors to build more factories and create an export system that

takes full advantage of the opportunities for new growth. Among those is the tariff-free market opening to the United States under its existing Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement legislation.

We also need to provide jobs, not only to those who lost their jobs last week, but also to the millions of Haitians who did not have a job in the first place. The people of Haiti are not looking for handouts. During my recent visit, I met many ordinary people on the streets. Yes, they needed water, food and medicine. But beyond that they told me that they need one thing above all else: jobs. They want to work to rebuild their lives. They want to work to rebuild Haiti. They want a future that offers stability, dignity and hope. We have a concrete plan to help.

Right now, we are seeking $41 million through a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) flash appeal to support a programme we call cash-for-work. We want to scale that up. Imagine what could be done with a cash-for-work programme two or three times larger. This is a programme to help Haitians help themselves by paying them to remove debris from the streets, to do demolition and reconstruction, and to help to deliver aid and construct camps for the homeless. The cost is $5 per person per day. With $5 per day, a worker can take care of his or her family. That money will begin to circulate through the economy, supporting small businesses and banks. That money will stimulate the economy and give Haitians hope. It will create more jobs.

Jobs like that are the social concrete and mortar that will hold Haiti together in this time of extreme stress. Yesterday, President Clinton and I agreed that he would do his utmost, first to mobilize support and funding for this effort and for others aimed at meeting Haiti's urgent needs and, secondly, to help lay a firm foundation for Haiti's longer-term future. As he said at our meeting, if this task is handled properly, we will have an opportunity to help Haitians reinvent their country. I urge the Assembly to do its part. Haiti's recovery must begin with its people, who are strong and resilient and impatient to get to work rebuilding their lives and their country.

To succeed on all those fronts, we need a clear and concrete sense of gaps and needs. That is why I have directed United Nations agencies to work with the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and others to begin an immediate post-disaster needs assessment. A number of Member States have called for a reconstruction conference. A preparatory meeting will be held in Montreal, Canada, on Monday. I have asked Under-Secretary-General John Holmes of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNDP Administrator Helen Clark to attend that important gathering.

Haiti has never been more in need. I thank the Assembly for its efforts on behalf of the people of Haiti, and for adopting today's two draft resolutions.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.42.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I would like to reiterate our deepest sympathy and solidarity to the people and Government of Haiti and to pay tribute to the United Nations staff and international peacekeepers who have lost their lives in the tragic events in Haiti. Brazil is honoured to present the draft resolution on the earthquake in Haiti, contained in document A/64/L.42 and entitled "Humanitarian assistance, emergency relief and rehabilitation for Haiti in response to the devastating effects of the earthquake in that country".

Since the draft resolution was submitted, the following countries have become sponsors: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, the Central African Republic, the Comoros, the Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Finland, France, the Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, the Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav

Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America, Viet Nam, Yemen and Zambia.

The draft sends a strong and clear message of support from the General Assembly and Member States to the people and Government of Haiti in this hour of dire need. While expressing the condolences and reiterating the solidarity of the international community, it outlines actions and measures needed to assist Haiti not only in the present humanitarian relief phase, but also in the efforts for early recovery, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development in the medium and long terms.

The international community has responded with prompt and generous support to the rescue efforts and emergency assistance for the affected populations, but additional resources are needed in order to overcome the emergency and ensure the transition from relief to reconstruction and development. In this regard, the draft further appeals to all Member States and relevant organs and bodies of the United Nations system, as well as the international financial institutions and development agencies, to provide speedy, sustainable and adequate support for Haiti, including with regard to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. It also calls on the international community to provide additional assistance, at the earliest, in response to the United Nations flash appeal for Haiti launched 15 January 2010.

The draft welcomes the leadership of the Secretary-General, as well as the coordinating role of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in support of the Government of Haiti. They have been instrumental in ensuring a speedy and coherent response to the emergency.

In this regard, the draft duly recognizes that, in the weeks and months to come, it will be especially important to explore ways for enhanced coordination for the reconstruction and development efforts in Haiti in the long haul. The people and Government of Haiti should be able to count on the support of the international community long after the attention of the international media is diverted to other issues.

Before concluding, I would like to submit the following technical revisions to the draft resolution.

In the fifth preambular paragraph, the term "Member States" should be added to the fourth line so that the clause reads "relief assistance and rescue operations provided on the ground by Member States, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the United Nations system".

Also, in the third line of the seventh preambular paragraph, the titles of the posts mentioned in the text should be rectified to read "Emergency Relief Coordinator and Resident/Humanitarian Relief Coordinator for Haiti".

Finally, the words "humanitarian and" should be added to the fourth line of the eleventh preambular paragraph so that it reads "coherent and coordinated among all humanitarian and development actors".

On behalf of the sponsors, I would like to submit the present draft, as orally revised, for adoption by consensus by the General Assembly.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.43.

Mr. Ali (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the honour to address the General Assembly on behalf of the Group of 77 and China to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/64/L.43. I wish to announce that Japan and the Republic of Korea have joined the sponsors of the resolution.

The developing countries face tremendous challenges caused by long-term natural disasters and resulting massive losses of life, property and infrastructure, as well as negative social, economic and environmental consequences.

One natural disaster may, in one night, reverse decades' worth of socio-economic development efforts. The negative impacts of climate change, the global financial and economic crisis, and increased food prices can be additional challenges to Member States, and especially developing countries, in their humanitarian response to natural disasters.

Draft resolution A/64/L.43 is one manifestation of the international community's determination to confront these challenges. The draft resolution stresses the importance of promoting international cooperation to support the efforts of countries affected by natural disasters, especially in the areas of preparedness, early

recovery and development in order to limit the negative impacts of natural disasters.

It also emphasizes the need to promote national risk-reduction capacities at all stages of the management of natural disasters and to integrate those goals into development plans, especially in regions vulnerable to natural disasters, such as urban areas. The draft resolution also stresses international cooperation in supporting the capacity-building of developing countries so they may benefit from the use of space-based technologies such as the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response. The draft resolution also encourages the increased use of space-based and ground-based remote-sensing technologies and the exchange of geographical data for early warning of natural disasters and risk-reduction preparedness.

The draft resolution also refers to the need to increase funding and the provision of human resources and necessary expertise, especially with regard to post-disaster recovery. It also calls on the United Nations and its humanitarian and development agencies to support national capacities to mitigate the impacts of natural disasters, including by providing immediate humanitarian and other assistance following such disasters.

Draft resolution A/64/L.43 also encourages all Member States to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian and development assistance provided in the context of international efforts. It also calls on the Secretary-General to continue to improve the international response to natural disasters and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, and to include in his report recommendations on how to address the gaps from relief to development, and the capacity of the United Nations to accelerate rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts.

In conclusion, I would like to express the gratitude of the Group of 77 and China to Mr. Carlos Suárez, who successfully assumed responsibility for coordinating the negotiations on draft resolution A/64/L.43. I should also like to thank the delegations that took part in the negotiations in a spirit of responsibility and flexibility. As in past years, we look forward to the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.

The Acting President: The Assembly will first take a decision on draft resolution A/64/L.42, as orally revised.

Draft resolution A/64/L.42, as orally revised, is entitled "Humanitarian assistance, emergency relief and rehabilitation for Haiti in response to the devastating effects of the earthquake in that country". I should like to inform the Assembly that Grenada, Haiti, San Marino and Tunisia have joined the draft resolution as sponsors.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.42, as orally revised?

Draft resolution A/64/L.42, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 64/250).

The Acting President: Before we continue, I should like to consult the Assembly with a view to proceeding immediately to consider the draft resolution contained in document A/64/L.43. In that connection, as the draft resolution has only been circulated this morning, it would be necessary to waive the relevant provision of rule 78 of the rules of procedure, which reads as follows:

> "As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting."

Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees with that proposal.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: We shall now take action on draft resolution A/64/L.43, which is entitled "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development". May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.43?

Draft resolution A/64/L.43 was adopted (resolution 64/251).

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Haiti.

Mr. Mérorès (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): The Haitian Government welcomes the initiative of Brazil and our many friends to introduce resolution 64/250, entitled "Humanitarian assistance, emergency relief

and rehabilitation for Haiti in response to the devastating effects of the earthquake in that country". My Government also welcomes the Assembly's timely adoption of resolution 64/251, entitled "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development".

Resolution 64/250 reflects the great and generous outpouring of compassion and solidarity from the international community to the Haitian people at a time of enormous pain. The Government of Haiti would also like to thank all the Member States that sponsored the resolution, as well as the other members of the General Assembly that have just adopted it.

The dreadful catastrophe that recently struck my country gives me yet another opportunity to express to the international community the deep gratitude of the Haitian people and Government for its formidable display of solidarity and compassion towards our people, who have been mercilessly punished by the fury of the seismic event of 12 January.

It was with horror and great sadness that we learned of the deaths of our friends and colleagues members of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, who lost their lives in the line of duty in the cause of peace. At this very trying time of great pain and national anguish, I would like, on behalf of the Government of Haiti, to express our sincere condolences to their friends and families, as well as to the larger United Nations family.

This is also an opportunity for me to thank the Organization and all the staff of the United Nations system, who are not just working tirelessly during the rescue phase but are also already planning for the country's reconstruction. I should like to express the great gratitude of the Haitian people and Government to all the rescue teams on the ground, including non-governmental organizations, who, in a spirit of enormous generosity and despite their own losses, have done outstanding work for more than a week to save lives and alleviate the suffering of my fellow Haitians.

As the Secretary-General mentioned a few moments ago, the toll in human lives, injured and missing persons and property damage has been overwhelming. To date, more than 80,000 dead have been buried. It is estimated that there are over 200,000 total dead and thousands of missing people, with one third of the overall population believed to be affected. Likewise, thousands of foreign residents and transients have also perished.

Public buildings, schools, hospitals and banks have been almost entirely levelled. All the buildings representing the authority of the State lie in ruins. The Government has virtually no physical premises. As Members will have seen in various images broadcast on television, the presidential palace, the parliament building, the house of justice, the chancellery and the hall of ministries have all have been destroyed. The result is that the Haitian Administration is currently working at a slow pace. The Port-au-Prince port, our telecommunications equipment, the general tax directorate and the general post office have all virtually disappeared. The vast majority of residential houses have been destroyed and the population is virtually in the streets, without shelter. Suffering, hunger, thirst and shortages of all sorts can be seen. Of course the needs are huge and require immediate responses.

Faced with this tragedy, the international community has come forward with great compassion, and it is with heartfelt gratitude that we welcome the exceptional efforts of all the friendly, brotherly countries that have rushed to our side.

Despite these horrifying circumstances, I want to convey our hope and belief that Haiti will rise again and embark on the path of genuine reconstruction, thanks to the courage and resolve of our people and with the help of the international community.

Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

At the outset, we wish to express once again our sincere and deepest condolences to and solidarity with the Government and people of Haiti, as well as to other nations and to the United Nations itself, for the massive loss of life and devastation caused by the earthquake that struck the capital of Haiti, Port-au-Prince, and surrounding areas on 12 January, aggravating the country's already fragile situation. We share the grief of the families of the deceased and express our sympathy and support to the injured and to all who were seriously affected by the catastrophe.

The European Union welcomes the immediate global response of the international community to this humanitarian crisis and fully supports the central and

general coordinating role of the United Nations in the international relief effort.

The European Union and its member States responded rapidly by providing humanitarian emergency assistance and deploying humanitarian and civil protection experts. The first priority has been to dispatch search-and-rescue teams, including military and civil engineering teams. Current efforts are focused on providing emergency health services, water, food, sanitation, medical facilities, shelter, logistics and telecommunications, among many other urgent needs, to the people of Haiti.

There is also a need for adequate security on the ground to ensure access to and the distribution of aid without hindrance, which will rely on the crucial cooperation of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and of countries that are in a position to lend their assistance at this critical phase. The European Union and its member States stand ready to provide additional assistance on the basis of the ongoing needs assessment, including military and civil resources, at the request of the Government of Haiti and the United Nations.

Since the earthquake of 12 January, several strong aftershocks have struck southern Haiti. This highlights the position of extreme vulnerability in which the Haitian people find themselves and the fact that the humanitarian and recovery effort will take time.

Nevertheless, the greatest possible synergies between all components of the response to this challenge must be ensured, both in the short term and in the medium to long terms. In this respect, we support the efforts being undertaken by the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy for Haiti, former President Clinton, as just announced by the Secretary-General.

The task before us will require a strong and sustained mobilization of the entire international community. The European Union has started work to that end by holding an special meeting of ministers for foreign affairs and cooperation devoted to the humanitarian crisis in Haiti. This meeting was held in Brussels on 18 January and chaired by the European Union High Representative, Mrs. Ashton. She will be here in New York today to meet with the Secretary-General. At that meeting, the European Union called for the convening of an international conference on reconstruction in Haiti once the needs for the post-emergency phase have been assessed. We welcome the preparatory meeting that Canada will host in Montreal on 25 January, and the European Union will, of course, attend that meeting and play an active role in its deliberations.

Yesterday, at the meeting convened by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, I announced the initial contribution to be made by the European Union and its member States within the framework of the humanitarian flash appeal launched by the United Nations.

Today, we reiterate our commitment in resolution 64/250, which was just adopted by consensus and which sends a strong message of solidarity and support to Haiti. We welcome in particular the work done by the delegation of Brazil in this regard and the support of all delegations to this important resolution, as evidenced by the many sponsors and the speed with which the Assembly was able to respond to this crisis.

Mr. St. Aimee (Saint Lucia): I speak on behalf of the 14 member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). We thank all those who sponsored resolution 64/250 for exhibiting the commitment of the international community to come to the aid and assistance of one of its members in this sad and trying time.

For us in the Caribbean region, Haiti — the symbol of freedom from time immemorial, the promoter of regional collaboration and assistance to its neighbours from its birth and the symbol of struggle against oppression and injustice from the time of its independence — holds a special place in our hearts. Unfortunately, all those symbols weighed heavily on Haiti, and the Haitian people have not been able to play their role as they should have, both in the region and in the wider sphere.

Yet we must not forget what Haiti stood for in its glory days and the very principles that enabled some, if not all, of us here in this Hall to take our rightful place among the community of nations. That is why Haiti and the resilient Haitian people need our help.

Over the past week, the international community has witnessed one of the worst natural disasters in history, as the massive earthquake in our sister CARICOM country of Haiti and its tragic aftermath caused untold suffering, death and destruction in a Member State least able to handle such a catastrophe.

Today, Haiti finds itself in dire need of our assistance, and I am glad to see that our memories have not been blunted by our successes and better fortunes. On all accounts, the response of the international community has been overwhelming, and we commend all involved.

In times like this, it is so refreshing to be part of the membership of this great body that is called the United Nations. Whatever our shortcomings in other areas, we remain truly a united body, helping and aiding when necessary. That is the message of resolution 64/250, and that is why we in CARICOM fully associate ourselves with its message. I must say that it is unfortunate that we need to wait for such catastrophes to bring out the best in our institution. Maybe we will change.

We in the Caribbean, though facing our own challenges and with our limited resources, understand our obligation to a sister island and a people that shares the same aspirations and is situated in the same path of hurricanes and hotspots of earthquakes. We are aware that it is Haiti today and maybe another one of us tomorrow. In fact, as we speak, aftershocks are still occurring in the region. One occurred just this morning, with a magnitude of 6.1.

We are also aware that, when the dust has settled on immediate needs and the losses are counted, the larger task of rebuilding will equally require our efforts, assistance and generosity. The best guarantee against future catastrophes, whether in Haiti or elsewhere, is assistance for self-reliance and sustainability. We must plan now for the next phase and commit now to the sustainable programmes that will help the victims and others in Haiti to overcome the stresses, the traumas and the memories of what took place there on January 12.

Even now, coordination of both the regional response efforts in Haiti and other response efforts will require significant attention. Although several CARICOM countries have readily available bilateral assistance, CARICOM will very soon define a niche, geographic or thematic, to target its intervention in Haiti. Based on reports, the operational scenario will require the total self-sufficiency of the assets deployed. For example, the sustainability of personnel being deployed in the field for an extended period is an issue for consideration.

Given the language that many of us share with Haiti, Creole, assets with that language capability are encouraged, especially for the long-term development challenges, where technical and technology transfer will be required in such fields as agriculture, reforestation and small enterprise development — all necessary for the long-term reconstruction and sustainability of Haiti.

I may sound as though the entire Caribbean region suffered the catastrophe, and truly we did since, in a small subregion such as ours, what affects one affects all. We also mourn with those of other nationalities who perished in the disaster. We extend our sympathies to the families and friends of United Nations staffers who gave their lives to the cause of helping Haiti re-establish its democracy. We extend our encouragement to the staffers who are there now, helping in the aftermath. We extend our thanks to all those brave men and women from all over and in diverse fields who themselves are living under stressed conditions to bring support to Haiti. History will not forget their deeds and will remember all those who gave so willingly and unselfishly.

A successful operation in Haiti will greatly enhance the standing of the United Nations, especially coming after what is perceived as a less than successful climate change negotiation. The resolution adopted today presents just such an opportunity, and that is why the Caribbean Community associates itself with it and thanks again its initiator, Brazil, the other sponsors and this body for the consensus reached on this resolution.

Mr. Normandin (Canada) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of Canada, I would like at the outset to convey our most heartfelt condolences to the people of Haiti following the violent earthquake that struck the country. I would also like to extend our sympathies to the family and colleagues of the United Nations for the loss of their loved ones. We grieve with them.

Canada has always had very close relations with Haiti and is determined to support the people of that country, working in close cooperation with the Government of Haiti and the United Nations in these difficult times. It is entirely appropriate that we should gather here today in this Hall to show our solidarity with Haiti by adopting resolution 64/250. We thank Brazil for this initiative. In adopting that resolution, the General Assembly is sending a clear message to the people of Haiti: We are at your side.

(*spoke in English*)

In response to the devastation caused by the earthquake, Canada has so far committed $135 million to humanitarian assistance in Haiti. This includes a $60-million contribution to the United Nations flash appeal for Haiti to fund essential necessities and basic services provided on the ground by United Nations agencies and for interventions in the areas of health, nutrition, protection, water and sanitation. In addition to this contribution, other Canadian assistance in support of the relief efforts has included search and rescue response, the provision of supplies and equipment, and Canadian Forces military assets.

Canada is pleased to note the speed and intensity with which the international community has responded to this disaster. Canada would like to commend the Secretary-General, the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the entire United Nations team for the swiftness of the United Nations response. At times like these, the United Nations has a key coordination role to play, and this is why Canada has been working closely with the United Nations and other donors in Haiti to make sure that our assistance is coordinated through the United Nations system, supporting the priorities set by the Government of Haiti, and channelled to where it is needed most.

All of our efforts are, of course, currently focused on the immediate needs of the Haitian people, but we also have to start thinking about the future, the transition to recovery and reconstruction. Canada will host a conference in Montreal on 25 January that will constitute a first step in this direction. Amongst other things, it will pave the way for a much larger conference on reconstruction, to be held at a place and time yet to be determined.

Once again, today's resolution sends a strong signal to the Government and the people of Haiti: We stand with you during these difficult times.

Mr. Zhang Yesui (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to thank you, Madam, and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for the briefings on the latest developments after the earthquake and the international relief efforts in Haiti. We thank the delegation of Brazil for submitting resolution 64/250 on the earthquake in Haiti to the General Assembly. We are pleased to note that the resolution has the support of all Member States. That will send a positive signal of unity to the international community.

On behalf of the Chinese Government and people, I wish to express our deep sympathy and condolences over the heavy casualties and loss of property caused by the earthquake, and our sadness and condolences over the unprecedented casualties suffered by the United Nations.

Since the earthquake, China has done what it can to provide support and assistance to Haiti. Since its arrival in Haiti on 13 January, the Chinese emergency rescue team has worked strenuously at the forefront of disaster relief in the country. The Red Cross Society of China provided $1 million in emergency aid to Haiti. The Chinese Government also provided 30 million yuan — approximately $4.4 million — worth of supplies to the country. The first batch of supplies arrived in Haiti on 17 January and the second, which was delayed due to the limited capacity of Haiti's airport, will be delivered on 26 January.

Yesterday, the Chinese Government announced its decision to contribute $2.6 million to the United Nations flash appeal for Haiti. To date, China has provided over $8 million in assistance to Haiti in cash or in kind. In addition, in light of the urgent needs of the earthquake areas, yesterday the Chinese Government decided to send a 40-member medical and epidemic prevention team to Haiti and to provide medicine and medical equipment to the country.

We note that the disaster relief efforts in Haiti are now in full swing. The Chinese Government appreciates the timely and effective response of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the relevant United Nations disaster relief agencies. The United Nations is universally recognized for its work in international humanitarian relief and development. In the areas of humanitarian relief, early recovery, reconstruction and long-term development, the United Nations has not only the authorization of Member States, but also expertise and technological advantages. In recent years, the United Nations has accumulated in-depth experience and established an effective coordination mechanism in response to emergencies such as the Indian Ocean tsunami and the Myanmar cyclone.

Enhancing the coordination of humanitarian assistance and strengthening planning for reconstruction efforts are two priority areas for disaster relief in Haiti at this time. On the one hand, the United Nations needs

to maintain close cooperation with the Haitian Government, integrate the disaster relief efforts of all parties, and improve the efficiency of relief efforts. On the other hand, if international aid is to be utilized effectively, it is imperative that the issue of reconstruction be taken fully into account in the current rescue and relief phase and integrated into the disaster relief efforts. We hope that the United Nations will strengthen coordination in that regard. We support the early establishment, through effective planning and speedy action, of a United Nations reconstruction coordination mechanism that will help to coordinate international relief efforts in Haiti, make the best use of relief funds and facilitate reconstruction efforts.

As the rotating President of the Security Council for this month, China has maintained close contact and cooperation on the issue of Haiti with the parties concerned. After the earthquake, the Security Council reacted immediately. It convened several meetings and issued two press statements by the President on the situation in Haiti (SC/9842 and SC/9846). On 19 January, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1908 (2010), by which it decided to send an additional 3,500 peacekeepers to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. The resolution will greatly facilitate the security, disaster relief and reconstruction efforts in Haiti.

Before concluding, I wish to thank the representative of the Sudan for submitting to the General Assembly, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, resolution 64/251, entitled "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development". We welcome its adoption by the General Assembly by consensus.

Mr. Núñez Mosquera (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to convey the condolences of the Cuban people and Government to the Haitian people and Government, the countries that have suffered the loss of their nationals in the earthquake in Haiti, and the United Nations family.

The United Nations is facing a new challenge. Assistance to the brotherly people of Haiti is a very urgent and manifest need. At the time of the disaster, over 400 Cuban workers were working selflessly and without pay in Haiti. The Cuban doctors began to offer their services from the first moment after the earthquake. It was the most significant medical assistance that the Haitian people received in the first 72 hours.

Immediately after the earthquake, more than 60 additional workers from the Cuban health service, with experience in similar emergency and disaster situations, joined the assistance work for our Haitian brothers. Moreover, there are 240 Haitian residents and students in their fifth year of medical training in Cuba. Many other young Haitians, trained as doctors in my country, also immediately joined the task of saving lives. As of 8 p.m. on 20 January, they had treated 14,551 patients and had carried out 1,252 surgical interventions. Cuban doctors are working at 21 assistance centres in the capital, the surrounding area and other departments of the interior. Cuba has set up 14 operating theatres, with 16 surgical teams.

Cuba reiterates its readiness to cooperate on the ground with all nations in order to help the Haitian people and to save more lives, given that it already has the staff and infrastructure in that country necessary for such a task. Over 100 specialists from various countries, including Venezuela, Nicaragua, Chile, Spain, Mexico, Colombia and Canada, as well as 17 nuns, are also working with their Cuban co-workers on the ground. The Haitian people need the international community's support. That support should not be limited to addressing the damage caused by the earthquake that shook Haiti.

Cooperation and assistance for Haiti should continue in the future, in close coordination with the Haitian Government and in full respect for the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-intervention, including in domestic matters. The United Nations has an important role to play in this process that should be neither ignored nor supplanted.

Cuba has provided free and disinterested medical assistance to the Haitian people since December 1998. To date, 6,094 Cuban participants have worked in Haiti's Haitian medical sector. They have carried out more than 14 million medical consultations and 250,000 operations. They have also assisted in more than 100,000 deliveries and saved over than 230,000 lives. Since 2004, thanks to Operation Miracle, 47,273 people in Haiti have received eye operations. Cuba has hosted the training of 917 Haitian professionals, including 570 doctors. At the moment, 660 young Haitians are studying in my country, including 541 who are being trained in medicine. The

cooperation between Cuba and Haiti also extends to several other fields, including education, agriculture, energy, fisheries and communications. As a result of that cooperation, 160,030 people in Haiti have learned to read.

These statistics are but a modest illustration of what the international community could achieve with will and determination. The Haitian people need the most resolute support from the international community in their efforts to emerge from the poverty and underdevelopment to which they have been subject during too many years of colonialism, neo-colonialism, military intervention and the imposition of dictatorial regimes. The United Nations is called upon to play a crucial role in achieving that goal.

Mr. Álvarez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I should like to convey to the Permanent Mission of Haiti, and through it to the Haitian Government and people, our heartfelt condolences in connection with the thousands of lives lost as a result of the earthquake. We also wish to extend the same condolences to all the countries that, like ours, have lost fellow citizens to that natural disaster, as well as to the entire United Nations family, which has suffered so much from that event, which took the lives of Hédi Annabi and Luiz Carlos da Costa, its highest officials in Haiti.

The international community has reacted with outstanding solidarity and generosity in the face of this tragic situation. The States Members of the Organization have provided extraordinary support to help alleviate the current situation in Haiti. We appreciate the work of all the people and agencies on the ground. In that connection, we commend the efforts of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, which reflect the ongoing commitment of the United Nations to Haiti.

The adoption of resolution 64/250, which was introduced by Brazil and of which we were a sponsor from the outset, has sent the clear and timely message that countries are united at this time to help a brotherly country. That is why we decidedly support the resolution.

Efforts to help Haiti will, of course, continue beyond this initial humanitarian assistance. For that reason, we should view this event as an opportunity to ensure that, in the near future, Haiti will be able to strengthen its capacities to achieve sustainable development. There is no doubt that this undertaking, in which the affected country must be the principal stakeholder, will require major coordination efforts with the Haitian Government and among international actors. That will be one of the greatest challenges we will face in the future as States Members of the Organization.

Mrs. Rubiales de Chamorro (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, we reiterate our condolences to the brotherly Government and people of Haiti, the United Nations family and all the countries that have lost citizens in this catastrophe.

Nicaragua, a country that has been beset by countless natural disasters, including a devastating earthquake in the 1970s, feels the pain of its Haitian brothers. Our solidarity has been evident since the initial aftermath of the earthquake. We have saved lives. We have acted with affection, humanity and the generous heart for which the Nicaraguan people are known. We have already deployed various humanitarian missions, including special rescue and medical brigades, medicine and tons of food. In line with our capacities, we are now working to provide as much medical care as possible.

Developing countries share what they have and not what they have left over, for we have nothing left over. Many other brotherly peoples in the international community have also responded in solidarity to this suffering and sought to alleviate the impact of the tragedy by providing meaningful humanitarian assistance. Nevertheless, it is regrettable to see how some are exploiting this painful situation to take control of a brotherly country mired in blood by occupying it with excessive military troops, who are in many instances creating hurdles and impeding the delivery of assistance to our Haitian brothers. That is the reality of what is taking place on the ground, and we must not ignore it.

We take this opportunity to ask the United Nations system to strengthen its leadership of the coordination of humanitarian assistance and, eventually, of reconstruction, in accordance with the principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations. No one should assume for himself the right to shape the destiny of a people suffering and dying helplessly as a result of catastrophe. The people and Government of Haiti should guide their own destiny.

Nicaragua stresses the need for timely periodic reports on the implementation of the resolution 64/250

so that we can improve on the progress made and face and overcome obstacles. We should send the Haitian people the clear message that our solidarity does not have a hidden agenda and seeks only to continue to save lives and to provide medium- and long-term support during the various stages of the recovery and reconstruction process.

Nicaragua joined the consensus on resolution 64/250 as a manifestation of its deep solidarity with the brotherly Haitian people, but we warn that the omission of any reference in the resolution to the presence of foreign troops should not be interpreted as an open door for military occupation. What Haiti needs are doctors, engineers, teachers, construction materials and the strengthening of its agriculture production, not soldiers. A situation as serious as that of Haiti should not be politicized or exploited to justify special interests; rather, it should be an opportunity for the countries of the world to unite in solidarity under the joint slogan "Haiti is not alone. The international community is with you. With your efforts and our support, you will come through."

Mr. Manjeev Singh Puri (India): The Government and the people of India are shocked and deeply grieved by the loss of human life and the damage that have resulted from the catastrophic earthquake in Haiti. India is familiar with the consequences of natural disasters and therefore fully understands the trauma and the suffering that the Haitians are living through. I reiterate the solemn pledges of the President and the Prime Minister of India to stand shoulder to shoulder with our Haitian brothers and sisters in their moment of sorrow. We will do whatever is in our power to partner with the people of Haiti in their journey to rebuild their lives and their nation.

We would also like to commend the United Nations and the international community for the swift and rapid response that has been mounted to assist the people of Haiti in their hour of need.

Immediately on hearing the news of the earthquake, the Government of India initiated measures to assist Haiti. On 15 January, we announced a cash contribution of $5 million towards relief measures as a token of India's solidarity with the people of Haiti. That assistance is being sent to the Government of Haiti through its Permanent Mission here in New York.

The Government and the people of India also pay homage to the men and women of the United Nations family, including one of our own, who were struck down at their posts. The loss to their near and dear ones is irreplaceable. It might, however, be some consolation that they fell in the service of humanity and while working for a greater good. The greatest tribute to them will be the continuation of their work in Haiti — a cause for which they gave their lives.

My delegation would again like to convey our condolences to the injured and the family members of those who have died on account of the earthquake. We have no doubt that the people of Haiti have the strength and resilience to overcome this immense natural disaster.

In conclusion, our delegation was happy to co-sponsor resolution 64/250, which was adopted earlier today. At this forum, we want to express our appreciation to the delegation of Brazil for having piloted the resolution.

Mr. Solón-Romero (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, on behalf of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, I wish to express our solidarity, condolences and respect to the Haitian people and the relatives of the victims. The terrible earthquake that shook the city of Port-au-Prince on Tuesday, 12 January, was one of the most violent and deadly in the history of the Caribbean. The damage that it caused in barely 60 seconds was devastating.

That human tragedy should prompt us to express humankind's deepest feelings of solidarity in the most selfless way and without the least political calculation. Humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction of Haiti must be undertaken in the fullest respect for Haiti's sovereignty. This human tragedy must not be used for any geopolitical strategy or to promote the business of private firms. Humanitarian assistance must take place in the fullest respect for the principles of international law, putting food, water, health and housing assistance and support for the relatives of the victims ahead of promoting a disproportionate military presence.

In that regard, we note and are concerned by the presence of approximately 11,274 additional United States troops, as stated in a report issued by the White House on 18 January. We are concerned that the issue of Haiti is being treated as a security issue before one of humanitarian assistance. We need to know under what mandate those 11,274 troops — a force greater than the

United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti — are operating.

The best way to support Haiti at this time is by immediately forgiving its entire external debt, as some countries and institutions are already doing. Likewise, financial aid must be in the form of donations without any kind of credit conditions. One way to help Haiti is to give the overseas brothers of Haiti the right to work in order to increase remittances to the country that will contribute to its reconstruction.

The reconstruction of Haiti is a task to which we all must contribute, learning from the lessons of the past by overcoming the neo-colonialism and interventionism that are to a great extent the causes of the poverty in Haiti. We want to promote and are resolutely committed to Haiti's reconstruction by Haitians and for Haitians, with the help of the entire international community.

What we have just seen in Haiti is just a tragic example of what can happen to any of our countries and to the entire planet if we are not able to unite in the most important battle of this century — the fight against climate change and the defence of our mother Earth.

Ms. Blum (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to reaffirm the solidarity of the people and the Government of Colombia with the Haitian people and Government in the difficult humanitarian situation being experienced by the brotherly country of Haiti owing to the earthquake of 12 January.

We thank the delegation of Brazil for having led the consultations to ensure that the General Assembly could today adopt resolution 64/250, on Haiti. The resolution sends a message about the political commitment of all Member States and of the international community to provide Haiti with the cooperation and support it needs in the face of this humanitarian emergency, as well as to carry out the processes of early recovery, reconstruction and transition towards sustainable development.

The immediate response of the international community in the face of this humanitarian situation has been crucial and will continue to be essential in the coming months. Colombia acknowledges the valuable work done by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which expeditiously put together the flash appeal to mobilize the necessary cooperation for Haiti during the humanitarian and early recovery phase.

Colombia has supported humanitarian assistance efforts while taking into account the priority areas that have been identified by the United Nations. To that end, with a view to contributing to response efforts, at the very outset the Government of Colombia put in place a coordinated effort involving the entities that comprise our national system for disaster prevention and action.

To date, Colombia has deployed five cargo planes and a naval ship to provide humanitarian assistance to Haiti. Two hundred and fifty persons have travelled to Haiti to provide assistance in various areas, including medical personnel and search and rescue experts. More than 400 tons of in-kind assistance have been sent to Haiti, including donations from the Colombian people.

In addition, the Government of Colombia has provided cash support to the World Food Programme to carry out its activities in Haiti. I should also like to report that, in its capacity as Chair of the Management Board of the Agency for Cooperation and Development of the Organization of American States, Colombia has proposed establishing a special account to support Haiti's reconstruction process. Similarly, the issue of Haiti has had a central place on the agenda of the fifteenth ministerial meeting of the Association of Caribbean States, which is currently being held in Colombia. The people and the Government of Colombia will continue to extend their cooperation and support in line with existing capacities and experience in the various areas of response.

Coordination is a crucial element in the work being carried out. Coordination is basic to ensuring that emergency assistance for affected populations is provided in an effective, organized and timely manner. In that connection, we would like to underscore the work that OCHA has done to build the proper coordination between agencies and aid workers, as well as in each of the various areas of humanitarian work. Colombia also stresses the importance of ensuring a coordinated and effective response to rehabilitation, reconstruction and the transition towards development during the early recovery stages. In that connection, we support the efforts announced today by the Secretary-General.

Colombia has had its own experiences in responding to serious natural disasters. In 1999, we undertook the recovery and reconstruction of cities affected by a devastating earthquake in our country's main coffee-producing region. The mobilization of resources at the national and international levels made it possible to rebuild urban areas. Resources were administered by a reconstruction fund. That arrangement made it possible to create jobs at the local level. It also allowed for efficient and transparent management that included assistance from UNDP and broad support from civil society institutions, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Today that region is one of our country's most dynamic.

Based on lessons learned and positive practices, we have recommended that we begin now to identify appropriate planning and financing mechanisms for Haiti's recovery and reconstruction that ensure the proper coordination between the Haitian Government and cooperation entities and humanitarian actors. Such mechanisms should ensure the coherence, efficiency and sustainability of efforts while avoiding duplication and loss of focus. They should also serve to contribute to organized financing and project management and implementation with clear responsibility for participation and implementation among the various international bodies, Governments and other governmental and non-governmental assistance entities.

My Government has suggested that such coordination be supported through a multilateral organization or international bodies. We have also called for each participating country and actor to commit itself to specific projects and the reconstruction of specific areas and sectors. All of that should be done in line with the specific technical and human capacities of participants to play an active part both in the face of the urgency of the moment as well as vis-à-vis Haiti's development and future.

We trust that the efforts of Governments and international organizations will make it possible to address both early recovery and reconstruction efforts and the enormous emergency assistance needs that have been identified. Colombia will continue to support United Nations efforts and initiatives to provide an suitable response to this humanitarian emergency and to produce new capacities and the conditions for the economic revival and sustainable development of the Republic of Haiti.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Once more, we reiterate our deep condolences to the Government and the people of Haiti and to the United Nations family on the loss of life, the injuries and the damage they have suffered. We convey our condolences to all the Governments that, like ours, suffered loss of human life.

As we have indicated on numerous occasions, Mexico's Government and society have mobilized on a sustained basis. We are also considering new support measures to be adopted in the near future. We are also part of a number of regional initiatives, to which some colleagues have referred.

We should address the urgent needs of today, but we must also look towards the future and at the fact that, among the countries of the international community, Haiti has in recent decades been one of the most sorely punished in terms of its development. Paradoxically, this unprecedented tragedy provides the United Nations with a historic opportunity to review its overall strategy for Haiti, with a view to fully taking on not just the challenge of contributing to its reconstruction but also that of helping it to overcome the enormous structural deficiencies in the way of its economic and social development, as well as its political and institutional weakness, fully coordinating with Haiti's Government and with key stakeholders.

Let us be clear: this is not about returning the country to its pre-earthquake state. Rather, this is about giving decisive momentum to Haiti's development. We therefore believe that the organs and mechanisms of the system associated with Haiti — from the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti to the various agencies, programmes and funds — should, in a coordinated manner, review the scope of their mandates and activities within their respective areas of responsibility with an eye on Haiti's future. Only in that way will the United Nations be able to fully bring about the coordination that is its role.

Both in the Security Council and in the General Assembly, the delegation of Mexico will continue to promote initiatives to that end. In that context, we welcome today's adoption of resolution 64/250 as a first step.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Government and the people of Venezuela are in mourning owing to the terrible catastrophe that Haiti is experiencing. We would

like to reiterate our condolences over the loss of the lives of thousands of Haitians and also the deaths of citizens of other nations and United Nations personnel.

Natural disasters occur suddenly without warning, ending human lives in seconds. They raze everything in their path, turning splendour and hope into destruction and devastation, showing no mercy towards the poorest and most vulnerable in particular. This time, it was Haiti's turn to once again feel nature's devastating blow, which was aggravated by the disruptive consequences of climate change and the terrible imbalance brought about by a desperately inhumane model of consumerism. Before this devastating tragedy occurred not only was Haiti already impoverished, but it had suffered the plundering and servitude of colonialism, slavery, imperialism and internal tyranny. Those realities plunged Haiti into hardship and terror. The earthquake in Haiti ended up destroying what its worthy people, with so much sweat and effort, had built up in recent years amid many limitations.

Venezuela is a Caribbean country, a brother of Haiti by blood and by tears. Historic ties in the fight for freedom and independence link us to its people. We Venezuelans feel particularly committed to its fate. The selfless solidarity and cooperation of the Bolivarian Government with the Haitian people is a matter of principle. It is a resolute, ongoing and permanent short- and long-term commitment.

To curb the devastating effects of the earthquake in Haiti and to address the humanitarian emergency that is currently paralysing its people, to date the Bolivarian Government has sent more than 7,000 tons of humanitarian aid and a team of over 200 specialists, which grows daily, among whom are doctors, fire fighters, search-and-rescue experts of the Simón Bolívar Humanitarian Task Force, as well as members of the Simón Bolívar International Brigade, who attend every time that natural disasters occur in brother countries. In the coming hours, another 6,000 tons of food and supplies will arrive in Haiti in four ships of the Venezuelan navy. A humanitarian corridor has been permanently established so that, by air and by sea, we Venezuelans can provide the support that the Haitian community needs in these terrible circumstances.

We are implementing a special humanitarian assistance plan for Haiti, seeking to ensure that basic institutions, including health care institutions, can function. Before the earthquake, Venezuela consistently provided ongoing support in that regard. In addition to the 225,000 barrels of diesel and petrol that we have already decided to send to Haiti through the Petróleos de Venezuela, S.A., yesterday our Government announced a donation of another 300,000 barrels of oil to that Caribbean brother country. The delivery of humanitarian aid is being coordinated with the other countries of the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas and with friendly countries, such as the Russian Federation, whose aircraft have landed on Venezuelan territory in order to provide humanitarian aid to that Caribbean brother country.

In this unfortunate hour of its history, Haiti needs the immediate and selfless cooperation and help of all peoples and Governments of the world. This terrible situation must be a chance for every one of the countries that make up the United Nations to give Haiti its solidarity and generous support, putting aside evil hegemonic claims to political and military control.

President Hugo Chávez stated recently that "the United States Government is taking advantage of the tragedy that the brotherly people of Haiti is experiencing to occupy it militarily". That concern and warning call have also been voiced by other heads of Government, people's organizations around the world and humanitarian organizations on the ground that have said that what Haiti needs are medicines and joint support, not military intervention.

No country should take advantage of the current situation of despair and vulnerability in Haiti by deploying, as is the case, a huge occupying military force that is bigger, as has already been said here, than the military presence of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti: a military occupation that is being carried out over the corpses and the tears of the Haitian people. The independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Haiti must be preserved and respected, irrespective of the current weakness of Haitian institutions as a result of the dreadful devastating earthquake.

We hope that resolution 64/250, which we adopted by consensus today and which Venezuela endorses, will be an appeal to the world conscience. We must respond to the immediate phase of humanitarian relief, without forgetting that the people of Haiti will continue to need us in the subsequent rehabilitation, reconstruction and development stages, a commitment that Venezuela most naturally and resolutely accepts.

As a Latin American and Caribbean country, brother of Haiti, we sincerely thank the States Members of the United Nations that have generously and promptly responded to the humanitarian emergency that is overwhelming our Caribbean brethren, with whom we have been united since the time of independence and in the fight for freedom and independence.

The work of Brazil in presenting the draft resolution that we adopted by consensus today has been commendable and should be acknowledged.

Ms. Davies (Australia): Five years ago this week, we gathered in this Hall to express condolences for all those affected by the earthquake and tsunamis that struck the Indian Ocean region on 26 December 2004. Today, the General Assembly gathers again, following Haiti's terrible natural disaster, to offer our condolences to the victims and their families and to demonstrate that Haiti has the support of the international community in this dark hour.

Resolution 64/250 signals that we, the States Members of the United Nations, are committed to providing the assistance that Haiti needs in a coordinated and effective way, from the immediate relief phase, through early recovery, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. Australia is pleased to have been a sponsor of the resolution. The resolution that we have adopted today stresses the importance of strengthening Haiti's disaster preparedness capacity and reducing its vulnerability to natural disasters. It is crucial that in rebuilding Haiti, we build back better and integrate disaster risk reduction into all development strategies, helping to avoid another disaster of this magnitude.

So far, Australia has pledged 15 million Australian dollars in humanitarian assistance, which will be channelled via the World Food Programme, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency and non-governmental organizations. We will consider further contributions towards Haiti's longer-term reconstruction. Our support demonstrates the strong concern of the Australian community for the desperate situation of Haiti's people.

We all continue to grieve for the valiant United Nations staff who lost their lives in the course of duty. In spite of their own losses, the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the United Nations country team immediately set to work to help the Haitian people. The importance of the United Nations role in the coordination of humanitarian assistance has been particularly clear in this emergency, and the United Nations team has done a remarkable job in extremely difficult conditions. We commend their efforts.

We recognize in particular the role of United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes and all the staff of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs involved in the coordination of assistance to Haiti, both on the ground and in New York and Geneva.

Mr. Nwosa (Nigeria): We in Nigeria were shocked at the monumental level of misery, pain and agony arising from the recent earthquake in Haiti. We are therefore grateful to the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting to discuss the way forward in mitigating the human misery in Haiti.

Nigeria laments the damage to lives and property caused by the earthquake and expresses its deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Haiti. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims of the tragedy. We also commiserate with the Secretary-General over the huge personnel losses suffered by the United Nations.

The magnitude of the horror and the significant proportion of the Haitian population who have been subjected to such a high level of penury and destruction are of great pain to the Government and the people of Nigeria. Haitians may have died in their thousands, and so many Haitians may have been consigned to the grave, yet the indomitable spirit of the living remains undaunted and undeterred as to what the future holds. We salute the courage and the resilience of the Haitian people, and we pay deserved tribute to the individuals, organizations, agencies and Governments that have acted swiftly to deal with the consequences of this disaster.

As responsible members of the international community, a community in which the fall of one means the systemic stumbling of the others, this is a time for concerted and coordinated efforts so that we can confront the current challenges and to keep Haiti on the international agenda. That is where the critical role of the United Nations comes in.

Nigeria's 121-strong police contingent on peacekeeping duty in Haiti and volunteer members of the Technical Aid Corps have begun to render their

service to the victims of the disaster. Nigeria recognizes that the current situation in Haiti calls for immediate action, and the urgency that underlines its positive response to the current challenge defines its reaction to this regrettable catastrophe. In that vein, the Federal Government of Nigeria is making an additional financial contribution in the sum of $1.5 million through the Secretary-General. That also informed Nigeria's decision to join in sponsoring resolution 64/250, which was adopted earlier this morning.

Mr. Cuello Camilo (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): At this time of sadness that the world is experiencing owing to the indescribable suffering that befell the Republic of Haiti on 12 January, the Dominican Republic would like to express its sincerest condolences to the people and the Government of Haiti, to the United Nations and to the other countries and organizations that were affected. That is why we are infinitely grateful to the delegations of Brazil and the Sudan for introducing resolutions 64/250 and 64/251, which we have just adopted today.

A few minutes after the disaster occurred in Haiti, President Leonel Fernández arranged for the dispatch of a plane equipped with skilled rescue personnel, trained dogs, first-aid teams, water, telecommunications teams and medicines. From the very beginning, doctors, volunteers and Dominican construction companies have been working together to remove rubble. An operations centre was set up in Jimaní fortress on the border with Haiti, from which were coordinated support for humanitarian assistance activities, the organization of transfers of the wounded and affected persons, access for humanitarian aid and all the coordination needed in such a tragic event.

The ministers of the armed forces, public health and social assistance and public works and communications immediately headed for Haiti in the plane in which President Leonel Fernández dispatched the first humanitarian aid contingent. Both from the air and from our embassy facilities, the destruction caused by the earthquake could be seen in order to assess what assistance to provide in the following days.

By order of President Leonel Fernández of the Dominican Republic, Dominican hospitals to which the injured would be taken were identified. All these hospitals in the Dominican Republic, both close to and far from the border, in cities such as Santiago, Santo Domingo and other towns in the interior of the country, are treating the Haitian wounded who have crossed the Dominican border. Ten mobile kitchens were set up, each able to feed 10,000 people daily. Six ambulances were also mobilized, as well as rescue teams of relief agencies, the Dominican Red Cross, civil defence and the Emergency Operations Commission.

The President of the Dominican Republic, Leonel Fernández, visited Haiti on 14 January, less than 36 hours after the tragic event, and was the first and so far only head of State to visit the country in person. He flew over the disaster area and met with President René Préval at the Haiti airport. They agreed on the implementation of an immediate programme of action to re-establish water, electricity and telecommunications services and to hold an international meeting to plan for the medium- and long-term reconstruction of Haiti.

On 18 January, with the approval and assistance of President Préval and at the initiative of President Fernández, the international meeting was held in Santo Domingo. Participants included representatives of the member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Canada, Spain, the United States and Brazil. The United Nations was represented by our colleague Edmond Mulet from the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). The Vice-President of Spain represented the European Union, and the Organization of American States (OAS) was represented by its Secretary General. The World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank were also represented. They gathered to examine the best way to address this tragic situation.

The countries and organizations present at that meeting agreed to promote the holding of an international conference to prepare a strategic plan for the reconstruction of Haiti that will, above and beyond emergency aid, help to strengthen in the medium and long term Haiti's viability and its political, social and economic stability. That conference will take place in the Dominican Republic.

A coordination committee was created comprised of Haiti, the Dominican Republic, CARICOM, the United Nations, the European Union, the OAS, the Rio Group, the United States, Mexico, Canada, Brazil, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank. This coordination committee will oversee the organization of activities, including the first preparatory meeting, to be held on 25 January in Canada, as

mentioned by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his statement this morning.

A working group appointed by the committee will prepare a draft strategic plan to be submitted for debate at the first plenary meeting. It will be based on three points: the Millennium Development Goals, the Haitian 2010 National Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy, and the World Bank document entitled "Options and opportunities for Haiti".

The expressions of solidarity by the people of the Dominican Republic with the people and Government of Haiti have been wide-ranging. We have held neighbourhood charity drives and telethons. We have postponed repatriations. We have made it easier for the wounded to cross the border and have offered free medical treatment in Dominican hospitals throughout the country for the injured. The Dominican Republic has also become the primary hub for international humanitarian aid to Haiti. Our three airports in Santo Domingo, three airports in the north — in Santiago, Puerto Plata and Samaná — and the Barahona airport, which is 45 minutes from the border at Jimaní, are working at full capacity, managing the hundreds of daily national and international flights bringing emergency aid for Haiti.

Just as a Dominican woman, Sonia Marmolejos, came to the Dario Contreras public hospital in Santo Domingo to breastfeed some of the dozens of Haitian babies affected by this tragedy, so the international community must once and for all make economic development in Haiti a reality. That country's problems have required peacekeeping support for some time, and now, after the earthquake, the reconstruction efforts will be the opportunity for us to take up the challenge of development in Haiti as a part of peacebuilding. Let us take up once and for all, and in an irreversible manner, the task of laying the foundations for sustainable development in Haiti in conditions of social justice and minimizing our vulnerability to the disasters that have historically devastated the Caribbean Basin.

Mr. Keegel (Sri Lanka): My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to Brazil for initiating resolution 64/250, on humanitarian assistance for Haiti, which we adopted today. We also thank the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representative of Haiti for updating us on the relief efforts.

Sri Lanka wishes to join others in this Assembly in conveying once again our deepest condolences to the Government and people of Haiti on the tragic loss of life and property following the devastating earthquake. As a country that faced a similar natural disaster five years ago, we are able to fully empathize with their suffering, and we once again convey assurances of our support and solidarity at this time of great sorrow. We have no doubt that, with the support of the international community and with their own efforts, the Government and people of Haiti will be able to rebuild their country.

Sri Lanka was fortunate not to have lost any of our 1,079 United Nations peacekeepers in Haiti. We are extremely heartened also to hear that our peacekeepers have been playing an important role since the day of the tragedy in search and rescue operations and in the distribution of food and water in the areas worst affected by the disaster.

As a token of our support and solidarity, the Government of Sri Lanka has granted a cash donation of $25,000 to the Government of Haiti and has today decided to send a consignment of essential supplies to the people of Haiti. We will continue to extend our support to the Government and people of Haiti by contributing to the United Nations flash appeal.

We also convey our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his leadership in ensuring that emergency relief assistance reaches the victims of the disaster in a timely manner. We convey through the Secretary-General our condolences to the families of the United Nations staff who lost their lives on 12 January. We recognize the role of the Special Envoy, Mr. Bill Clinton, and the Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. John Holmes.

Finally, my delegation conveys its thanks to you, Madam President, for giving us this opportunity to once again renew our commitment to support the people of Haiti at this time.

Mr. Chávez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to reiterate the heartfelt condolences of the Peruvian Government and people to the authorities and people of Haiti, who have been struck by the terrible disaster that has caused irreparable human loss and devastation in the country. In addition, I would like to express my Government's deep sorrow for the many who have gone missing from our United Nations family. I would like to mention in particular our distinguished colleagues Hédi Annabi

and Luiz Carlos da Costa, who spared no effort in their untiring work for Haiti.

From the very beginning, Peru joined the efforts of the international community to support the urgent search and rescue efforts in Haiti. We sent three planes with humanitarian aid, a medical team and a rescue team. My country, as a contributor of troops to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) and a member of the Friends of Haiti, also supported and co-sponsored the MINUSTAH troop increases that were necessary so that it could contribute to the efforts for recovery, reconstruction and stability in that fraternal Caribbean nation. We also co-sponsored resolution 64/250, on humanitarian assistance, which was presented by Brazil and which the Assembly has just adopted.

It is comforting to witness the immediate response of the international community and the way that, throughout the world, every possible effort is being deployed to commit resources and aid in order to respond effectively to the challenges that must be overcome in dealing with this human tragedy. We have all witnessed the enormous problems that Haiti has been facing with courage and with international support.

In this grave situation, Peru believes it indispensable for the United Nations, more than ever before, to play a leading role in the difficult endeavour of reconstructing Haiti. In the short term, this task means the collective development of multiple humanitarian assistance efforts, taking into account the number of victims. In this respect, we support the work of the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy and the efforts being deployed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

My delegation believes that is it extremely important to define the steps and procedures that above all will enable us to assess exactly what the needs of the Haitian people currently are. We also need to ensure that all of the assistance that is being distributed is delivered in a coordinated and effective fashion. We should ensure that we have all the tools and means necessary to ensure that aid flows remain constant. United Nations joint coordination is essential to manage all the international cooperation, whether multilateral, bilateral or from the private sector, and to avoid any scattering or overlapping of efforts.

The Government and people of Haiti face a great test, but it should also lead to long-term commitments being made to Haiti by the international community in order to consolidate a process of recovery, reconstruction and economic development in the country. In that spirit, Peru will participate actively at the high-level meeting next Monday in Montreal, Canada. We are confident that it will be a first step in a new and even more committed phase of international cooperation for the reconstruction of Haiti. Peru reiterates its readiness to continue to contribute to this effort.

Mr. Wolff (United States of America): The United States welcomes today's resolution 64/250, on humanitarian assistance, emergency relief and rehabilitation for Haiti. We are working urgently with our international partners, nations around the world, non-governmental organizations and the entire United Nations system to help the people of Haiti recover from the current crisis and rebuild over the long term.

We are also pleased to join the consensus on this year's resolution on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development (resolution 64/251), to help provide timely and effective assistance to communities shaken by natural disasters. The United States remains deeply committed to working in close partnership with our fellow Member States and the United Nations system to respond to natural disasters around the world. We note for the record that this resolution contains a paragraph with a reference to international humanitarian law, which should not be confused with the humanitarian activities or assistance that are the subject of today's resolution. International humanitarian law, to which we are fully committed, is a term that governs situations of armed conflict, not humanitarian assistance.

Regrettably, I must respond to the undignified allegations of three isolated delegations — those of Nicaragua, Bolivia and Venezuela — who have used this sombre occasion in support of Haiti to politicize the matter with ill-informed, tendentious statements. In calling for us all to avoid politicizing the situation in Haiti, they have done just that by alleging ulterior motives and claiming occupation. Another representative, from a large Caribbean island nation, rightly noted the Haitian people's need for help from the international community and the assistance over time in close cooperation with Haiti, which should be

with the full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Haiti. We share that approach.

We are in Haiti at the request of the Haitian Government, with only humanitarian interests in mind. President Préval and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton issued a joint communiqué reflecting that. Today, the Permanent Representative of Haiti expressed the gratitude and appreciation of his Government for all the international assistance his country has received. It would be appropriate for those three countries that have ridiculously alleged conspiracy and occupation, without any foundation, to actually respect the position of the sovereign country of Haiti, about which they claim to be so concerned.

The Acting President: I now call on the observer of the Holy See.

Mr. Bharanikulangara (Holy See): At the outset, the Holy See joins those delegations who have expressed their solidarity with and prayers for those in Haiti suffering in the aftermath of the recent earthquake. My delegation welcomes the adoption of resolution 64/250 as a sign of the international community's solidarity in addressing the needs and challenges of the entire Haitian population.

As we adopt this resolution today, it is those who toil around the clock to rescue people trapped, those who labour to provide medical and humanitarian assistance to the millions left homeless, and those whose hearts ache as they mourn the loss of a child, mother, father or friend who need our continued financial, physical, emotional and spiritual support in this trying time. We pray that these people find the strength, support and assistance they need as the families and communities across Haiti begin to rebuild their country.

As the resolution notes, there are persistent challenges to providing and delivering life-saving humanitarian support. The international community has pledged millions of dollars, and volunteers from around the world have been risking their lives and their security to provide immediate assistance to the Haitian people. The challenges and the need for sustained action will continue long into the future.

For its part, the Catholic Church, with its vast network of organizations already in the country, has been working to provide emergency services and goods. Catholic Relief Services, Caritas Internationalis, Caritas Haiti, the Order of the Servants of the Sick and parishes around the world have responded with millions of dollars in aid and thousands of professionals and volunteers to provide emergency medical and humanitarian aid. The continued engagement of those organizations has enabled an immediate response to the crisis, but it will also be crucial in assuring long-term growth and renewal within the country. In the relief and recovery programmes also, due participation of and cooperation with faith-based organizations and civil society will help ensure more efficient delivery of humanitarian assistance and better implementation of the gradual reconstruction of Haiti.

While we mourn the loss of untold thousands, it is the international community's responsibility to show that in all corners of the globe we will not forget them — in particular those dedicated members of the United Nations family committed to international peace.

The Acting President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/2 of 19 October 1994, I now call on the observer for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Mr. Jilani (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies): I am grateful for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

I would like to express our deepest condolences and sympathy to all the people of Haiti, as well as to the families and friends of the United Nations family, for the tragic loss of so many lives as a result of the earthquake that struck Haiti. Our deepest sympathy and condolences also go out to our colleagues in the Haitian Red Cross.

From the very first days of the disaster, the Red Cross and Red Crescent family started the mobilization of its global network and the deployment of its teams and emergency response units. Today, the Red Cross and Red Crescent family has more than 20 national societies deployed in support of the Haitian Red Cross, with about 20 emergency response units (ERUs) deployed and working. They include a rapid-deployment hospital from the Norwegian and Canadian Red Cross; a field hospital from the German and Finnish Red Cross, which is being established today; more than 35 basic health clinics, which are supported by the American, French, Swedish, German, Finnish,

Spanish, Swiss and Iranian national societies; water and sanitation ERUs from the American, Australian, British, Italian and Danish Red Cross societies; relief shelter, logistics and base camp ERUs and so on. To date, 29 Red Cross and Red Crescent flights have landed in Santo Domingo or Haiti. Yesterday, the Colombian navy vessel *Cartagena de Indias* left its namesake port with 333 tons of relief supplies from the Colombian Red Cross.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent family today has around 400 delegates assisting the Haitian Red Cross in its heroic efforts to bring relief to the suffering and assist the most vulnerable victims of this devastating disaster. More than half of them are from national Red Cross societies of the region.

In closing, allow me to read from the diary of the Canadian Red Cross programme manager who has been living and working in Haiti since September 2009. She was in her apartment in Port-au-Prince when the earthquake struck and immediately went to the Haitian Red Cross office, where she worked with staff and volunteers to provide emergency first aid and triage for more than 250 injured in the first night. This is her account, dated 17 January, five days ago.

> "My days start very early in the morning. I have started a cantina service for our local logistic support staff. I get up early every morning and prepare breakfast with their help. I spoke with the President of the Haitian Red Cross and expressed my concern for the people who were suffering beyond words, and asked for her support. She immediately instructed her staff to assist us in transporting the injured for medical care. I couldn't help it: I gave her a tight hug, tears in my eyes.
>
> "Our action saved 10 lives. On the drive back to the office, I still couldn't believe what I was seeing: piles and piles of buildings, smashed cars, destruction and pain and suffering everywhere; an endless sea of people on the streets and camping out in parks. The Haitian Red Cross staff and volunteers are everywhere. Working, moving people, moving equipment, they are trying to salvage what little can be saved from their seriously damaged buildings. Everyone is doing what they can.
>
> "We noticed a convoy of seven trucks from the Dominican Red Cross. The head truck driver was asking for directions, so we stopped and directed them to where they were supposed to deliver the medicine and relief items they were transporting. The Spanish Red Cross has started setting up water production plants, as well as distributing water. They were able to distribute 100,000 litres of water in two areas, and they are mobilizing volunteers to help them from one place to another.
>
> "When I arrived back at our office, I was informed that search and rescue crews had located about 40 people in the collapsed Caribbean supermarket. They had been given water to drink, and crews were going to try and get them out as quickly as possible.
>
> "In the evening, I went to the International Red Cross base camp, and the scene was just amazing. The Canadian delegates had already set up their tents. The Americans were planning their relief distributions. The French were coordinating the arrival of the Norwegian planes and equipment for the field hospital. The Swiss were entering the camp with all their equipment, followed by delegates from the Swedish, Finnish and German Red Cross. The camp looks like the whole world is here, and more are coming."

The Red Cross and Red Crescent family will continue to mobilize the power of humankind and its global network to assist the most vulnerable throughout the relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction phases in Haiti.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker for this morning's debate.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan on a point of order.

Mr. Ali (Sudan): I take the floor to correct an editorial mistake in draft resolution A/64/L.43, which we have just adopted as resolution 64/251. In paragraph 14, the phrase "in full accordance with the provisions of resolution 46/182 and the annex thereto" should read "in full accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 46/182 and the annex contained therein".

I kindly ask that this mistake be corrected.

The Acting President: The Secretariat takes note of that technical correction to the text of draft resolution A/64/L.43.

Several representatives have requested to exercise the right of reply. May I remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to 5 minutes for the second intervention, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mrs. Rubiales de Chamorro (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would simply like to remind the representative of the United States of the history of the multiple interventions and occupations carried out by his country in the Latin American and Caribbean region, taking advantage of various circumstances, whether of a natural or political character. I kindly ask him not to be so disingenuous. Although his President says that we should not look towards the past, the images of his troops in Haiti today cannot but remind us of the past. We reiterate that what Haiti needs is an army in white coats — teachers and engineers — and not United States Marines.

Mr. Solón-Romero (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We find ourselves obliged to take the floor because a question has been raised as to what facts motivated our statement some minutes ago. The fact is that there is a presence of 11,274 United States military troops on the territory or the coast of Haiti, as acknowledged and publicized in a White House press release. We have every right to wonder why there is a military presence of such magnitude, which exceeds the size of all the contingents that all countries have provided to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, and what is the function of that military contingent.

A second question that representative of the United States has not answered is this: To whom does that United States presence answer? Is it under the command of the United Nations? To us it is basic: what we say should be what we do. If we say that the United Nations is going to coordinate and guide all the international assistance, then we must ensure that that is actually the case.

Regrettably, we have here a problem that cannot be evaded. We want to clearly spell out that that question has not been answered and that we shall continue to ask for an explanation and a correction of the policy that has given preference to military assistance over the type of assistance that is basically of a humanitarian nature.

Mr. Sammis (United States of America): I just wanted to take this opportunity to respond to the statements that we have just heard from a couple of delegations.

First, I would like to reiterate that the American presence in Haiti is intended solely to serve humanitarian purposes and is covered under the communiqué between Haiti and the United States. It is regrettable that those delegations are attempting to exploit the tragedy that is before us now for their own political benefit. But my own Government will focus, along with the rest of the international community, on helping the Government and the people of Haiti to confront this catastrophe.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 70.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

United Nations A/64/PV.70

General Assembly

Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

70th plenary meeting
Monday, 8 February 2010, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Agenda item 45 (*continued*)

Sport for peace and development: building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal

Solemn appeal by the President of the General Assembly (A/64/646)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now read out the President's solemn appeal.

"The ancient Greek tradition of the *ekecheiria*, or 'Olympic Truce', born in the eighth century B.C., serves as a hallowed principle of the Olympic Games. In 1992, the International Olympic Committee renewed this tradition by calling upon all nations to observe the Truce.

"Through its resolution 48/11 of 25 October 1993, the General Assembly urged Member States to observe the Olympic Truce from the seventh day before the opening to the seventh day following the closing of each Olympic Games. This appeal was renewed in the Millennium Declaration.

"In the 2005 World Summit Outcome, our leaders emphasized that 'sports can foster peace and development', and encouraged the General Assembly to foster a dialogue and agreed proposals for a plan of action on sport and development.

"On 3 November 2005, the General Assembly held a plenary debate on the agenda item entitled 'Sport for peace and development', and also adopted, with universal support, resolution 60/8, entitled 'Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic Ideal', deciding to consider this item every two years in advance of each Summer and Winter Olympic Games.

"To this end, on 19 October 2009, the General Assembly adopted resolution 64/4. In that resolution, the Assembly urged Member States to observe, within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations, the Olympic Truce, individually and collectively, during the XXI Winter Olympic Games, to be held in Vancouver from 12 to 28 February 2010, and the X Paralympic Winter Games, to be held from 12 to 21 March 2010.

"The Olympic movement aspires to contribute to a peaceful future for all humankind through the educational value of sport. The Games will bring together athletes from all parts of the world in the greatest of international sports events as a means to promote peace, mutual understanding and goodwill among nations and peoples — goals that are also part of the founding values of the United Nations.

"As an expression of these common objectives, in 1998 the International Olympic Committee decided to fly the United Nations flag

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at all competition sites of the Olympic Games. The United Nations system and the International Olympic Committee have subsequently strengthened their mutual cooperation and support through joint endeavours in fields such as poverty alleviation, human and economic development, humanitarian assistance, education, health promotion and HIV/AIDS prevention, gender equality, environmental protection and peacebuilding.

"Recognizing the importance of sport and the Olympic ideals, and in order to further promote the cooperation between the United Nations and the International Olympic Committee, the General Assembly, in its resolution 64/3 of 19 October 2009, decided to invite the International Olympic Committee to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer.

"As President of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, I solemnly appeal to all Member States to demonstrate their commitment to the Olympic Truce for the 2010 Vancouver Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, and to undertake concrete actions at the local, national, regional and world levels to promote and strengthen a culture of peace and harmony based on the spirit of the Truce."

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the solemn appeal in connection with the observance of the Olympic Truce?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish to thank the Government of Canada for hosting the forthcoming Winter Olympic Games, and to wish it every success.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 45?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 63 (*continued*)

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Draft resolution (A/64/L.39/Rev.1)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Members will recall that the Assembly held a debate on agenda item 63 and its sub-items (a) and (b) jointly with agenda item 47 at the 22nd through 24th plenary meetings on 20 and 21 October 2009.

We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/64/L.39/Rev.1, entitled "Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa". I wish to inform the Assembly that since the issuance of draft resolution A/64/L.39/Rev.1, Portugal and Serbia have become sponsors.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.39/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/64/L.39/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 64/252).

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): May I take it that the Assembly decides to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 63?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.

United Nations A/64/PV.71

General Assembly
Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

71st plenary meeting
Tuesday, 23 February 2010, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

In the absence of the President, Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

Agenda item 136 ***(continued)***

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/64/631/Add.1, A/64/631/Add.2 and A/64/631/Add.3)

The Acting President: In keeping with the established practice, I should like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to documents A/64/631/Add.1 to Add.3, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communication contained in document A/64/631, Kyrgyzstan, Paraguay, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Swaziland and Timor-Leste have made the necessary payments to reduce their arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in those documents?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 49 ***(continued)***

Culture of peace

Draft resolution (A/64/L.30/Rev.2)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the Assembly held the debate on this agenda item at its 41st and 42nd plenary meetings, on 9 and 10 November 2009. Members will also recall that the Assembly took action on draft resolutions A/64/L.13 and A/64/L.14 under the same agenda item at the 42nd plenary meeting, on 10 November 2009, and draft resolutions A/64/L.5 and A/64/L.15/Rev.1 at the 60th plenary meeting, on 7 December 2009.

I now give the floor to the representative of Azerbaijan to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.30/Rev.2.

Mr. Mehdiyev (Azerbaijan): On behalf of the main sponsors — Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey and Turkmenistan — I would like to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.30/Rev.2, entitled "International Day of Nowruz".

For over 3,000 years, Nowruz has been celebrated on 21 March as the beginning of the new year by over 300 million people around the world, including in the Balkans, the Black Sea basin, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and other regions. As the embodiment of the unity of cultural heritage and centuries-long traditions, Nowruz plays a significant role in strengthening ties among peoples on the basis of mutual respect and the ideals of peace and good-neighbourliness. It also reflects features of cultural and ancient customs and is centred on the affirmation of life in harmony with nature. All civilizations celebrate the unity and diversity of humankind, which are enriched and evolve through

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dialogue with others. Throughout history, there has been interaction among various civilizations.

Nowruz also contributes to the enrichment of humankind, which is fully in compliance with the objectives of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1). In that Document, heads of State and Government acknowledged the importance of respect for cultural diversity throughout the world and the need for dialogue and cooperation among different cultures, civilizations and peoples. In facilitating the process of mutual cultural enrichment and in promoting civilizational exchanges, Nowruz develops international cooperation and strengthens the cultural identity of interested States. At the same time, Nowruz promotes the culture of peace and solidarity between generations and within families, thus contributing to cultural diversity and friendship among peoples and various communities.

Cultural diversity and tolerance, a healthy lifestyle and the renewal of the living environment are promoted and transmitted from generation to generation during this cultural event. One of the main objectives of Nowruz is to encourage a transformation of behavioural attitudes towards sustainability. That is reflected in activities focused on the preservation of nature, including the planting of trees, respecting water resources and cleaning houses.

Nowruz is a celebration that consists of various ceremonies, rituals, cultural events and customs, including traditional games, culinary traditions, music and dance. It forms a fundamental part of the cultural identity of the communities concerned. From antiquity, Nowruz has embraced a variety of different features of intangible cultural heritage, with a very vast geographical scope.

Women play an important and major role in cultural events at Nowruz by managing ceremonies and disseminating traditional knowledge to youth.

Nowruz encourages intercultural dialogue and understanding and reciprocal knowledge for the purpose of peace and reconciliation. As different people celebrate it in different ways, Nowruz promotes the manifestation of a peaceful and unifying form of cultural diversity. It also contributes to the dissemination of the values of social justice and solidarity, equality and equity, and charity and poverty alleviation.

In order to further encourage intercultural and intracultural dialogue and mutual respect among cultures, while at the same time strengthening their transmission to future generations, Nowruz was included in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on 30 September 2009.

As part of the common heritage that belongs to all humankind, all cultures have values that must be respected and preserved. We attach particular importance to international cultural cooperation for the development of peaceful relations and friendship among peoples and to promoting better understanding of each other's way of life. We believe that this cooperation will promote the enrichment of all cultures and contribute to the establishment of stable and long-term relations between peoples.

Azerbaijan believes that Nowruz deserves to be recognized as an international day by the General Assembly. That is why we initiated this draft resolution. Together with the main sponsors, we now call upon all Member States to support the draft resolution as an expression of solidarity and a recognition of efforts aimed at preserving and developing cultures and traditions that have existed for more than 3,000 years.

The text of the draft resolution was extensively discussed and negotiated with Member States in an open and transparent manner. We look forward to its adoption by consensus.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/64/L.30/Rev.2, entitled "International Day of Nowruz".

I would like to announce that, since its publication, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/64/L.30/Rev.2: Albania, India and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.30/Rev.2?

Draft resolution A/64/L.30/Rev.2 was adopted (resolution 64/253).

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who wishes to make a statement following the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. Al Habib (Islamic Republic of Iran): After such a harsh and cold winter, let me talk about our longing for a joyous spring. Let me talk about Nowruz, the new day, the festival of revival and rebirth on our planet and in our souls.

In the words of Jalaluddin Rumi, the great Persian poet,

> "Nowruz has arrived and the beloved's message has come. We are drunk with love and intoxicated and cannot be still. You may say that it is resurrection that has raised from the Earth the heads of those who rotted in December and January, the dead of yesterday. After all, the trees of the spirit will become even so, the tree of excellent boughs and the fortunate will be manifest".

I would like to express my gratitude for the unanimous support of all Member States for resolution 64/253.

Nowruz marks the first day of the Persian New Year. In harmony with the rebirth of nature, Nowruz is celebrated on 21 March, the very first day of spring each year. But Nowruz, with all its customs and rites, is much more than a date marked on our calendars. It conveys a deeply rooted culture that brings hope, peace and prosperity to millions of people around the world, regardless of their ethnicity or political and religious views.

From the time that Nowruz was established in the land of Persia and thereafter, throughout all the long centuries that Persia has been a melting pot for civilizations and ethnicities and until today, Nowruz has served as the common language for millions of people all around the world, including for over 3,000 years in the Balkans, the Black Sea basin, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Indian subcontinent, the Middle East and many other regions. It is representative of the intangible cultural heritage of humankind, as recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in September 2009.

Nowruz plays a significant role in strengthening ties among peoples on the basis of mutual respect and the ideals of peace and good-neighbourliness. The traditions and rituals of Nowruz reflect the ancient cultural customs of the civilizations of East and West alike, influencing those civilizations through the interchange of human values. To commemorate Nowruz means to respect the origins, history, values and legacy of magnificent civilizations.

In conclusion, to commemorate Nowruz also means to promote life in harmony with nature, natural cycles and sources of life. In that regard, this resolution complements resolution 63/278, entitled "International Mother Earth Day", which the General Assembly adopted on 22 April 2009.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 49.

Agenda item 52 ***(continued)***

Follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2008 Review Conference

Draft decision (A/64/L.47)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft decision A/64/L.47, entitled "Fourth High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development".

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to adopt draft decision A/64/L.47?

Draft decision A/64/L.47 was adopted.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 52.

Programme of work

The Acting President: I wish to inform members that the consideration of sub-item (j) of agenda item 112, "Appointment of three ad litem judges of the United Nations Dispute Tribunal", which was scheduled for today, has been postponed to a later date to be announced.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.

United Nations A/64/PV.72

General Assembly
Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

72nd plenary meeting
Friday, 26 February 2010, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

Agenda item 136 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/64/631/Add.4)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like, in keeping with established practice, to draw the attention of the General Assembly to documents A/64/631/Add.4, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communication contained in documents A/64/631 and A/64/631/Add.1, Add.2 and Add.3, Chile and the Sudan have made the necessary payments to reduce their arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter. May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in these documents?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 64 (*continued*)

Report of the Human Rights Council

Report of the Secretary-General (A/64/651)

Draft resolution (A/64/L.48*)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Members will recall that at its 31st plenary meeting on 30 October 2009 and at its 36th, 37th and 39th plenary meetings on 4 and 5 November 2009, the Assembly held a debate on the reports of the Human Rights Council contained in documents A/64/53 and Add.1. Members will also recall that, at its 39th plenary meeting on 5 November 2009, the Assembly adopted resolution 64/10.

I give the floor to the representative of Qatar to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.48*.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to express our appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting of the General Assembly in follow up to the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, widely known as the Goldstone report (A/HRC/12/48). We thank you for your positive and timely response to the request of the Group of Arab States to convene this meeting following the Secretary-General's submission of his report (A/64/651) pursuant to the request made by the Assembly in its resolution 64/10 of 5 November 2009.

We further thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his submission of that report and express our deep appreciation to him for his firm and consistent calls for full respect for international law, for the protection of civilians in all circumstances, and for the realization of accountability and justice.

We believe that our meeting today constitutes yet another crucial step in the international community's efforts to uphold international law and in its struggle to end impunity, to deter future violations of international law and to promote real peace through the exertion of serious efforts aimed at ensuring accountability and justice for the grave breaches of international humanitarian law and human rights committed during the Israeli military operations in the Gaza Strip last

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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year, which caused extensive loss of life and injury and vast destruction and devastation from which the besieged Palestinian civilian population, including children and women, regrettably and tragically continues to suffer to this day.

I have the honour, on behalf of the sponsors, to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.48*, entitled "Follow-up to the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict (II)". The draft resolution represents an important procedural follow-up to resolution 64/10, bearing in mind that the Secretary-General, in his report to the General Assembly, notes that "no determination can be made on the implementation of the resolution by the parties concerned" (*A/64/651, para. 11*). In that respect, we believe it necessary for the Assembly, in promoting accountability and justice, to call once again on the parties concerned to comply with the calls made in its previous resolution in this regard.

In its preambular part, the draft recalls the General Assembly's relevant resolutions, including resolution 64/10 on follow-up to the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict. The remainder of the preamble is devoted to recalling and reaffirming relevant instruments and principles of international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law. This includes the Fourth Geneva Convention and its applicability to the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, as well as the human rights covenants. The draft resolution also reaffirms the obligation of all parties to respect international humanitarian and human rights law, reiterates the importance of the safety and well-being of all civilians, and reaffirms the obligations under international law regarding the protection of civilians in armed conflict.

Moreover, the draft stresses the need to ensure accountability for all violations of international humanitarian and human rights law in order to prevent impunity, ensure justice, deter further violations and promote peace, and, in this connection, expresses the conviction that achieving a peaceful settlement to the question of Palestine is imperative for the ultimate attainment of lasting peace and stability in the Middle East.

In the operative paragraphs, the draft takes note of the Secretary-General's report of 4 February 2010, submitted pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 64/10. Paragraph 2 reiterates the call upon the Government of Israel to conduct investigations that are independent, credible and in conformity with international standards into the serious violations of international humanitarian and international human rights law reported by the Fact-Finding Mission towards ensuring accountability and justice. Paragraph 3 reiterates the Assembly's urging for the conduct by the Palestinian side of investigations that are independent, credible and in conformity with international standards into the serious violations of international humanitarian and international human rights law reported by the Fact-Finding Mission, towards ensuring accountability and justice.

The draft also reiterates the recommendation to the Government of Switzerland, in its capacity as depositary of the Fourth Geneva Convention, to reconvene as soon as possible a Conference of High Contracting Parties on measures to enforce the Convention in the occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and to ensure its respect in accordance with common article 1, bearing in mind the convening of the Conference in 1999 and 2001 and the statement and declaration adopted at that time. Finally, the draft once again requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly, within a period of five months, on the implementation of the present draft resolution, with a view to the consideration of further action, if necessary, by the relevant United Nations organs and bodies, including the Security Council.

On behalf of all the sponsors, I express our deep hope for the broadest possible support for this important and serious draft resolution. The international community is duty-bound to remain firm and steadfast in its efforts to uphold international law and United Nations resolutions, and to ensure accountability and justice in all circumstances, including with regard to the situation in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem. In this regard, we are certain that the General Assembly's adoption of this draft resolution will make a constructive and significant contribution to these principled efforts.

Ms. Shalev (Israel): We are convened here today to vote on a draft resolution (A/64/L.48*) presented by the Arab Group in reaction to the Secretary-General's report of 4 February 2010 (A/64/651). In the aftermath of Operation Cast Lead, Israel is conducting and will continue to conduct investigations that are

independent, credible and in conformity with international law. Such investigations are conducted by us after any military operation, as part of our law and practice. The investigations after Operation Cast Lead are detailed in the reports of the State of Israel that were shared, and will continue to be shared, with the United Nations.

On the other hand, the Palestinian submission to the Secretary-General cannot genuinely address the conflict between the State of Israel and the Hamas terrorist entity. For, who exactly is the "Palestinian side" in the proposed draft resolution, the side that is urged to undertake investigations that are independent and credible and conform to international standards?

Can the Palestinian Authority conduct an investigation in Gaza, from which it was violently ousted in a bloody coup? Or, in contrast, do we really believe that the terrorist Hamas organization will investigate its use of human shields, its appalling methods of targeting civilians and its cynical use of schools, hospitals and mosques as weapons of terror?

The Goldstone report (A/HRC/12/48) fails to address the threat of asymmetric warfare and terrorism that uses civilians as shields and targets. Let me state clearly: Israel will never neglect its duty to defend its citizens, its existence, its democracy and its freedom. We will do so with vigour against Hamas, Hizbullah or any other terrorists, wherever they may be.

As Israel faces this existential threat, we remain committed to acting in accordance with international law and the law of armed conflict. This basic obligation is a reflection of our values as a democracy and our belief that human life must be protected.

It is this belief that drives our call to resume peace negotiations without preconditions. It is this belief that drives our desire for peace.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item. We shall now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/64/L.48*, entitled "Second follow-up to the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict". I now give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Botnaru (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I take the floor to announce that since the submission of draft resolution A/64/L.48*, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Iraq, South Africa, the Sudan and Bangladesh.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Chile, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Gabon, Greece, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zimbabwe

Against:

Canada, Israel, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Panama, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United States of America

Abstaining:

Albania, Australia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Mexico, Montenegro, Netherlands, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Samoa, San Marino, Slovakia, Ukraine

Draft resolution A/64/L.48 was adopted by 98 votes to 7, with 31 abstentions* (resolution 64/254).

[Subsequently, the delegations of Afghanistan, Armenia, Belarus, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Philippines, and Uzbekistan advised the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote on the resolution just adopted, may I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Thalassinós (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): Today, the General Assembly has adopted resolution 64/254, entitled "Second follow-up to the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict". This new text, which follows up on resolution 64/10 of 5 November 2009, suffers from the same lack of objectivity. Consequently, the Republic of Panama voted against the resolution, and we shall remain against a document that fails to take due process into account.

The resolution just adopted, just as the previous resolution did in its operative paragraphs 3 and 4, once again urges the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority to carry out investigations that are independent, credible and in conformity with international standards into the alleged violations of international humanitarian law.

The Republic of Panama is entirely in agreement with these fair requests. Yet the problem lies in the fact that both resolutions prejudge the results of the investigations that both the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority are to carry out. On the basis of this document, both parties to the conflict have been declared guilty beforehand, without the balance that is necessary on this delicate issue. The text of the resolution anticipates the outcome. While it is necessary to ensure that those responsible are held accountable and are brought to justice, this cannot be done on the basis of a resolution whose text prejudges the outcome. It is logical that such premature condemnation will never result in what all of us in this room yearn for — a peace process that respects international law and the rights of both peoples to live in peace, security, justice and harmony.

Panama consistently upholds the principles of the United Nations Charter and defends the relevant standards and principles of international humanitarian law. Thus, Panama will never trivialize its position on a case that seems more like an inquisition than the pursuit of what is right and fair. Let it be perfectly clear that our vote was neither against our Palestinian brothers nor in favour of our Israeli brothers. It was a vote for justice and impartiality.

Panama again reiterates that the investigation process must be just, objective and reliable. That is why the Republic of Panama voted against the resolution.

Mrs. Grau (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): In its capacity as depositary of the Geneva Conventions, Switzerland has striven resolutely to follow the recommendation made in resolution 64/10. It has already given an account of the progress of its preliminary consultations to the Secretary-General in report A/64/651.

Resolution 64/254, adopted by the General Assembly today, indicates that Switzerland should continue its efforts. A second round of consultations open to all high contracting parties and other interested parties will commence on the sidelines of the thirteenth session of the Human Rights Council.

Switzerland believes that a conference of high contracting parties should be inclusive, seek to enhance respect for international humanitarian law and not echo political discussions for which other forums exist. In its consultations, Switzerland will be guided by the concern to protect the civilian populations and to ensure that their humanitarian and security needs, causes of grave concern in the current circumstances, are met.

We remind the high contracting parties and other interested parties of the importance of their cooperation and contribution during those consultations on the modalities and outcomes expected from the Conference.

Mr. Wolff (United States of America): The United States remains deeply concerned about the pain and suffering endured by Palestinians and Israelis alike. We continue to believe that the best solution is to achieve a comprehensive peace in the region, including two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. There is no substitute for direct negotiations between the parties leading to the creation of a Palestinian State, and we should all be working to advance the cause of peace, not to hinder it. To that

end, we must safeguard the ongoing efforts to restart permanent status negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

The United States strongly supports accountability for any human rights and humanitarian law violations in relation to the Gaza conflict. Our goal in that regard remains to have the domestic authorities carry out thorough, independent and credible investigations of allegations of such violations. In that regard, we note Israel's submission of a detailed 46-page report to the Secretary-General, providing information on its domestic investigations, and we note that the Palestinian Authority has recently established an independent investigative commission. The issues raised by resolution 64/254 that are related to last year's conflict in Gaza should be resolved by credible domestic investigations and their follow-up.

We continue to believe that the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, widely known as the Goldstone report (A/HRC/12/48), is deeply flawed. We have previously noted shortcomings that include its imbalanced focus on Israel, the negative inferences that it draws about Israel's intentions and actions, and its failure to deal adequately with the asymmetrical nature of the Gaza conflict and to assign appropriate responsibility to Hamas for deliberately targeting civilians and basing itself and its operations in heavily civilian-populated urban areas.

The Goldstone report is also problematic in its many overreaching recommendations and its sweeping legal and political conclusions. Like the resolution just adopted, the report contains a counterproductive recommendation to convene the high contracting parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention and an inappropriate attempt to press action on the Security Council. The resolution that the General Assembly has just adopted reflects several of the same problems as the predecessor that it recalls. For those reasons, we voted against the resolution.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Today, the General Assembly is meeting for the second time in only four months to consider the follow-up to its discussion on the implementation of the recommendations of the Goldstone report (A/HRC/12/48) on the war crimes and crimes against humanity perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinians during its aggression against Gaza.

Our meeting is being held primarily owing to Israel's failure to respect resolution 64/10 and its refusal to submit a report in response to the report. That position has just been affirmed by the representative of Israel, who stated that Israel carries out investigations in the aftermath of any aggression it carries out in the region. She claimed that Israel informs the United Nations of such investigations. That means that Israel is flouting resolution 64/10. It is as if Israel were bestowing a gift on the international community or the United Nations.

This Israeli position accurately reflects the attitude that that country has always held — ever since its establishment through a United Nations decision — in considering itself above the law in a historic context known to all. This Israeli position shows scorn for international law and resolutions. Israel's exemption from the obligation to respect the rules of international law and the provisions of the Charter and its continuous violations of resolutions of international legitimacy have undermined the credibility of collective international action and have caused the United Nations to lose the international community's faith in its importance, prestige and status, while upholding a logic of the abuse of power and excessive force and a policy of double standards.

The delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic voted in favour of the resolution that we have just adopted, which holds Israel responsible for the crimes committed during its aggression against Gaza, on the basis of Syria's faith in the justice of the Palestinian cause and the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people for the liberation of their land from occupation and their right to self-determination. Israel's persistent refusal to respect hundreds of resolutions of international legitimacy, including resolution 64/10, requires us to take measures today that will hold it accountable for its crimes in order to achieve justice and fairness for the victims of that barbarous Israeli aggression and to preserve the remaining credibility of the norms of international law and the principles and purposes of the Charter.

Here, my country's delegation wishes to underscore that international law contains no provisions for holding occupied peoples accountable for resisting occupation. Quite the contrary, international law explicitly affirms the right of such peoples to struggle for their rights. International agreements related to international humanitarian law,

in particular the Geneva Conventions, have affirmed the responsibility of the occupying Power to protect peoples under occupation. They make no reference to the right of the occupying Power to kill civilians under its occupation.

Moreover, that right is enshrined in the text of the Charter that led to the birth of our Organization. Dozens of Member States represented here today are proud — and rightly so — of having achieved their membership through their struggle against colonialism and foreign occupation. We therefore reject any suggestion in the resolution equating the illegal practices of the Israeli occupier, on the one hand, and acts of legitimate resistance, on the other.

We believe that any such suggestion has no legal basis, since it is Israel that has been occupying Palestinian territories for decades. It is Israel that has used internationally banned weapons to kill children, women and elderly and innocent people in Palestine. It is Israel that continues to establish settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories and to destroy houses in occupied Jerusalem, driving out its inhabitants and depriving them of their right to live in their own city and homeland. It is Israel that persists in blockading Gaza and cutting down olive trees, the symbols of peace. It is Israel that continues to undertake terrorist assassinations both within and beyond Palestine, as it did in Dubai, as everyone knows.

Hence, reversing the facts and trying to put the aggressor and the attacked party on an equal footing is tantamount to denying the reality of events and to distorting the facts uncovered by the Goldstone report and its recommendations. It is a denial of the right of the occupied people to resist occupation. Syria, like many others that share its beliefs, cannot accept that truths should be represented as falsehoods and that oppression and crime should triumph over justice and law. No one can falsify history, distort geography and rob the language of law of its essence in the body in which we are gathered.

Mr. Schaper (Netherlands): I am speaking on behalf of the Czech Republic, Hungary and the Netherlands. Our countries abstained in the voting on resolution 64/254 and wish to explain their vote as follows.

In our view, the resolution contains elements that are positive, but also elements that cause concern. On the one hand, we recognize and welcome that efforts have been made to make the resolution less unbalanced than previous resolutions pertaining to the follow-up of the Goldstone report (A/HRC/12/48). We also welcome the elements that underline the need for independent investigations by the parties.

On the other hand, we note that the resolution is silent on the difference in the follow-up until now by the parties concerned. The Israeli authorities are undertaking an ongoing investigation and have shared its interim findings with the Secretary-General, while the Palestinian Authority has until now only set up a committee. We feel that the resolution could and should have more adequately reflected those realities.

We are also concerned that we are again confronted with an operative paragraph calling for a Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention. In our view, pursuing that track does not do justice to the letter sent by Switzerland to the Secretary-General, which states that, of the three categories of reactions, only one category was in favour, while the other categories were either firmly opposed or not enthusiastic, and therefore there was not a dominant trend. However, more important, we feel that such a Conference would most probably be politicized and will therefore be detrimental to the efforts to relaunch the Middle East peace process. In that context, let me reiterate that it is our conviction that this matter should be pursued, first of all, in Geneva, and not in New York.

Mrs. Juul (Norway): While international humanitarian law and the protection of civilians in armed conflict are key issues of human dignity and of utmost importance to Norway, at a time when we see that the right of civilians to protection under international humanitarian law is under increasing pressure due to the nature of modern conflict, it is our obligation to work to ensure that those rules are respected by all parties to a conflict and that all those responsible for the violation of international humanitarian law are held accountable.

We believe that the main focus of resolution 64/254 is relevant and constructive. We particularly appreciate the focus on process, as well as the efforts of the main sponsors to address the key concerns of many United Nations Members, including Norway, thereby obtaining broader support. The effectiveness of the message is significantly enhanced by that approach. Norway supports the main message of the resolution —

that investigation by the parties should be independent and credible and comply with international standards. Further, we support the role of the Secretary-General in monitoring the national investigations.

For those reasons, Norway voted in favour of the resolution.

Mr. Khazaee (Islamic Republic of Iran): We have today adopted another resolution on the follow-up to the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict (A/HRC/12/48), and I would like to explain the position of my delegation on that resolution.

We voted in favour of resolution 64/254. However, we want to put on record our dismay over the lack of meaningful progress on the prosecution of war crimes committed during last year's Israeli onslaught against Gaza. Of course, since that date, the Israeli regime continues to defy the will of the international community and persists not only in continuing the blockade of the Palestinians in Gaza, but also in assaulting the Islamic and Christian holy places in Jerusalem.

Tel Aviv recently decided to add the Al-Ibrahimi mosque in Al-Khalil and the Bilal mosque in Bethlehem, along with the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem, to its heritage list. It also dispatched a death squad to Dubai to assassinate Mahmoud Al-Mabhouh, using fake or fraudulent European passports. Had the international community been able to punish those responsible for the crimes committed in Gaza, perhaps we would not have witnessed such new atrocities.

Finally, although the resolution adopted is unbalanced and unfair in its treatment of Israel, the occupying Power, which committed so many abhorrent crimes against the Palestinian side, it still provides some degree of hope for action to be taken by the relevant bodies of the United Nations, including the Security Council, in order to put an end to the culture of impunity for Israeli war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): The peace process in the Middle East is at a delicate and critical juncture. There is an urgent need for practical steps to be taken on the ground towards the resumption of negotiations. Uganda voted in favour of resolution 64/254 because we are convinced that the international community should encourage the parties to undertake their own credible investigations into the conduct of the Gaza conflict. We are convinced that these investigations can contribute positively to the healing and confidence-building that are so essential at this point in time in the Middle East. This is the understanding with which we have supported today's resolution. It does not in any way change our previous position of abstention with respect to resolution 64/10.

Finally, all parties in the Middle East need to take concrete steps to restart peace negotiations. Uganda will continue to support the efforts of all parties to achieve comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): We appreciate the effort of the Secretary-General in preparing the report (A/64/651) on this matter. We take note of the ongoing investigation of the Government of Israel and of the process that has been initiated by the Palestinian side. Japan decided to support resolution 64/254, just adopted, because it is based on the spirit of respecting international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We sincerely hope that this process will not have a negative effect on efforts to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): Australia was deeply saddened by the events of December 2008 and January 2009 in the Gaza Strip and southern Israel. As we have made clear on a number of occasions in the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Human Rights Commission, Australia supports the proper investigation of allegations of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law during that conflict. We voted against resolution 64/10 in November because of a number of concerns arising from the language of that text and because of the flawed nature of the Goldstone report (A/HRC/12/48) that the resolution was based on.

We decided to abstain in the voting on resolution 64/254 because we recognize that it reflects genuine efforts to overcome differences and because it concentrates on the need for the investigations arising from the Gaza conflict, which are essential. Our vote on today's resolution, however, does not change the continuing concerns we hold about the lack of balance, the scope and recommendations of the Goldstone report, or our strong preference that the parties be allowed sufficient time to pursue their investigations.

We believe it vital that discussions relating to the Goldstone report remain constructive. It is important to work to bring the parties together, rather than drive them apart through unhelpful rhetoric or actions. We also believe that now is not the time to convene a conference of the high contracting parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention. Doing so would result in a politicized debate that would be counterproductive, we think, to peace efforts. Indeed, Australia firmly believes that the current situation of ongoing conflict, insecurity and uncertainty is neither acceptable nor in the interests of Israel, the Palestinians, the Middle East region or the broader international community, and we urge all parties to resume peace negotiations as a matter of compelling urgency.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): New Zealand wishes to explain its vote on resolution 64/254. New Zealand has consistently called for investigations into alleged violations of human rights and humanitarian law arising from the conflict in Gaza in December 2008 and January 2009. We have stated that those investigations should be credible, independent and conducted to internationally accepted standards. We recognize and appreciate the efforts of Israel so far and the fact that these have been reported to the Secretary-General. We look forward to Israel and Palestine continuing their efforts.

New Zealand abstained in the voting on resolution 64/10, which the General Assembly adopted on 5 November 2009, because it endorsed a report of the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/12/48) on a special session that included a biased, one-sided resolution that New Zealand could not endorse. Because there is no such reference in the present resolution and because we support the investigations, we have now joined those voting in favour of this resolution. Above all, New Zealand seeks a just, enduring and comprehensive peace settlement based on the two-State solution, with Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and security. We call on the parties to resume negotiations to that end.

Mr. Askarov (Uzbekistan): The Government of Uzbekistan fully supports the findings and recommendations of the report of the Secretary-General (A/64/651) and resolution 64/10.

Mr. Moraes Cabral (Portugal): Portugal voted in favour of resolution 64/254, which we have just adopted, because we believe in the importance of appropriate investigations of all alleged breaches of international law and international humanitarian law in all situations. We consider that resolution 64/10, which we also supported, played an important role in encouraging Israel and the Palestinian side to launch a process of investigation. Portugal takes positive note of the first steps taken by the parties in this regard. We hope that the adoption of this resolution will constitute a definitive step in the pursuit of appropriate accountability, completing the implementation of recommendations contained in resolution 64/10.

Mr. Kleib (Indonesia): The position of my delegation is loud and clear. We support the Goldstone report (A/HRC/12/48) and would like to have its recommendations fully and consistently implemented. A comprehensive solution should be established in order to ensure accountability and justice with regard to the conflict in the Gaza Strip last year. For that reason, Indonesia supports the follow-up to the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission to the Gaza Conflict by United Nations organs and bodies.

Without a doubt, Israel deployed excessive and disproportionate use of force and collective punishment during the Gaza Strip conflict. It is the people of Gaza who suffered through the war. They continue to bear the brunt of Israeli aggression. They are in serious humanitarian distress even as we speak and are being denied access to their basic humanitarian and reconstruction needs. In effect, they continue to be the victims of a process in which it now appears as if they were equal contributors to their own punishment. We do not believe that a situation of equal treatment for perpetrators and victims alike can be said to be just.

We are concerned, therefore, that the wording of resolution 64/254 does not clearly reflect an appropriate balance or that it can ensure that justice will prevail in the near future for the people of Gaza. Despite that shortcoming, Indonesia supported the resolution that has just been adopted. It is our strong wish that it be fully implemented without any further delay.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting.

I now give the floor to the observer of Palestine.

Mr. Mansour (Palestine): I would like to begin by expressing the gratitude of Palestine to all those who were able to venture out in this massive

snowstorm to come to this room today to participate in the adoption of a very important resolution. We thank them all and regret that 56 delegations were unable to make it. I am sure that the snow is the reason. However, the trend is obvious and clear. The number of those opposed to the essence of the resolution and the resolutions adopted previously is shrinking; it moved from 18 in opposition the last time to seven this time. I think that that is a victory for all of us, for the victims among the Palestinian people and for international humanitarian law.

I also wish to begin by expressing to you, Mr. President, Palestine's deep appreciation for convening this meeting of the General Assembly to ensure the continuity of the principled efforts of the international community to follow up the report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict (A/HRC/12/48), also known as the Goldstone report. As we all know, along with the many other investigative reports issued in the aftermath of last year's Israeli military aggression against the Gaza Strip, that pivotal report exposed the true scope and scale of the grave breaches of international humanitarian law and human rights abuses committed by Israel against the defenceless and besieged Palestinian civilian population under its occupation.

In our ongoing quest to end impunity and to ensure accountability for crimes committed and justice for the victims, we have returned to the General Assembly following its initial effort to follow up the Goldstone report with the adoption of resolution 64/10 in November. In that regard, we express our thanks to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his recent submission of a report (A/64/651), as requested by the Assembly in resolution 64/10.

We have given due consideration to the Secretary-General's report, in particular his observation that no determination could be made as to the implementation of the resolution's provisions. In our efforts at this stage of the follow-up process, as reflected in the clear and focused content of resolution 64/254, which has just been overwhelmingly adopted by the Assembly and as affirmed by the Arab Group, we reiterate that we interpret that observation to mean that the Israeli paper annexed to the Secretary-General's report does not constitute compliance, as it does not fulfil the call for independent and credible investigations that conform to international standards into the serious violations reported by the Fact-Finding Mission. The Assembly has therefore reiterated its call on Israel for independent and credible investigations to ensure accountability and justice for the crimes committed.

At the same time, as by the end of the reporting period the Palestinian side had only been at the preliminary stage of its effort to conduct and independent and credible investigation as called for by resolution 64/10, the resolution adopted today also once again urges the Palestinian side to conduct such an investigation. We reaffirm that we take that responsibility upon ourselves very seriously, based on our deep conviction in and respect for the rule of law, including humanitarian and human rights law, and for United Nations resolutions.

As such, the independent investigative commission that has been established by presidential decree has set out to undertake the necessary steps to fulfil its mandate, in accordance with the recommendation of the Fact-Finding Mission and pursuant to resolution 64/10, to ensure accountability and justice. Therefore, in the coming five-month reporting period defined by the resolution just adopted, Palestine intends to carry out, in the most efficient manner, an independent and credible investigation into the allegations made in the report of the Fact-Finding Mission and to submit a substantial response to the Secretary-General.

Furthermore, in that regard, we reiterate that we do so not on the basis of any symmetry or proportionality between the Palestinian people under occupation and Israel, the occupying Power, for there is no equivalence whatsoever between the scope, scale, intensity and gravity of the Israeli aggression and crimes against our people and actions by the Palestinian side. Rather, we do so based on our firm belief that our adherence to international law and the fulfilment of our responsibilities can only further enhance collective efforts to uphold international law, including in particular those laws explicitly intended to ensure the safety, well-being and protection of civilians in armed conflict in all circumstances.

Moreover, we do so based on our firm belief that such efforts will enhance our collective efforts to end the culture of impunity in which Israel, the occupying Power, has so arrogantly, flagrantly and aggressively conducted itself for far too long without repercussions. Acting above the law, Israel has inflicted untold

suffering and devastation on the Palestinian people it has oppressed for over four decades in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. Its course has gravely undermined the applicability and credibility of international law.

It is high time to end and reverse this destructive, obscene pattern of behaviour by Israel. That begins with ensuring accountability by punishing those responsible for the perpetration of war crimes against innocent civilians and with ensuring justice for the many victims of those crimes. In this regard, we stress that our quest for accountability will not end until we achieve justice for the thousands of Palestinian victims — children, women and men — who have suffered under Israeli occupation and who look to the international community to ensure that justice is served and international law upheld and respected equally in all circumstances.

Further, in this connection we cannot overemphasize the importance of the reaffirmation in the resolution we have adopted with regard to the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention to the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem, and to the relevant human rights instruments. Respect and ensuring respect for the Convention, in accordance with common article 1, is paramount and is an obligation that all high contracting parties must uphold with utmost seriousness. We thus welcome the reiteration by the Assembly of the recommendation to Switzerland, in its capacity as the depositary of the Geneva Conventions, to reconvene as soon as possible a Conference of High Contracting Parties on measures to enforce the Convention in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem.

The occupied Palestinian territory cannot remain the exception to the rule when it comes to respecting the provisions of the Convention, which explicitly aims to ensure the protection of civilians in time of war, including in situations of foreign occupation. Practical measures are clearly needed to enforce respect for the Convention. We thus hope that the Conference will be reconvened in the timeliest manner and will build upon the important comprehensive declaration adopted by the high contracting parties in December 2001.

I wish to conclude by expressing Palestine's genuine and deepest gratitude and appreciation to all of the Member States that voted in favour of resolution 64/254 today. Their principled support is a clear reaffirmation of their conviction in the rule of law, including international humanitarian and human rights law, and their collective commitment to upholding the law in all circumstances, including with regard to the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory. It is also a clear reflection of their desire and efforts to prevent impunity, ensure justice and deter further violations of the law, all of which are imperative in our long quest to promote a just, lasting, comprehensive and peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine, for peace cannot be attained without justice.

I reiterate our thanks for the overwhelming and principled support of the General Assembly, and I thank you very much once again, Mr. President.

The President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 64.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.

United Nations A/64/PV.73

General Assembly
Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

73rd plenary meeting
Tuesday, 2 March 2010, 12 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

The meeting was called to order at 12.15 p.m.

Earthquake in Chile

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to express, on my own behalf and on behalf of all the States members of the General Assembly, our deepest sympathy to the Government and people of Chile for the tragic loss of life and material damage that have resulted from the recent earthquake. May I also express the hope that the international community will show its solidarity with Chile and respond promptly and generously to any request for help.

I propose that the Secretariat send a letter of sympathy and solidarity to the Chile through Her Excellency the President of Chile.

Agenda item 62 (*continued*)

Advancement of women

Commemorative meeting to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): Representatives will recall that at its 2nd meeting, on 18 September 2009, the General Assembly allocated item 62 to the Third Committee. In order for the General Assembly to proceed expeditiously on this item, may I take it that the Assembly agrees to consider this item directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): May I further take it that the Assembly agrees to proceed immediately to the consideration of agenda item 62?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with decision 64/530 of 18 December 2009, the General Assembly will now hold the commemorative meeting to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

We have gathered here today to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and to renew our commitment to the full and accelerated implementation of the Platform for Action.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action represents a milestone in the advancement of women's rights. Fifteen years ago, the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing moved the global agenda for gender equality and the empowerment of women into the twenty-first century. The Beijing Declaration consolidated five decades of legal and policy advances aimed at securing equality of women in law and in practice. The Platform for Action expanded and deepened previous political agreements and charted a results-oriented way forward. Through these measures, the Beijing Conference built on the rights, gains and new opportunities that women throughout the world had worked hard to acquire.

Since Beijing, much has changed for the better for the world's women and girls, but new challenges

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have also arisen. The recent economic and financial crisis, the food crisis and the challenges of climate change are having an often disproportionate impact on women. We need to ensure that women can benefit equally from recovery measures on an equal footing with men. The scourge of violence against women remains pervasive, both in times of peace and in situations of conflict. I commend the Secretary-General for launching a global, multi-year campaign called "UNiTE to End Violence against Women", and I join him in his call for urgent and committed action. Ending violence against women is our shared responsibility.

The Assembly has increasingly recognized the impact of gender differences in many areas of the Organization's work. This fall, the high-level plenary meeting on the Millennium Development Goals will be a test case of our commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action. Without progress in gender equality, there can be only limited progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

The 15 years since the Beijing Conference have seen considerable advances in gender equality and the empowerment of women, but many challenges remain. Let us recommit ourselves to the full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action at the national level and make this a better and more equal world for all women and girls.

I now give the floor to the Deputy Secretary-General.

The Deputy Secretary-General: Before beginning my remarks, I would like to first offer my sincerest condolences to the Government and people of Chile for the tragic loss and devastation caused by the earthquake last weekend. The United Nations family stands ready to assist in whatever way we can. Our thoughts and prayers are in a special way with those families bereaved.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women are fundamental to our Organization. I am honoured to address the Assembly today on this important topic. The Charter of the United Nations affirms the principle of equality between women and men. Since its founding, the United Nations has helped to shape political discourse and to establish international norms, goals, policies, strategies and programmes to promote the rights and empowerment of women and girls worldwide.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 and which we commemorate this afternoon, is at the heart of this normative and policy framework. The Beijing Conference was one of the most participatory and inclusive conferences in United Nations history. We witnessed an unprecedented mobilization of policymakers, women's groups and academics.

The influence and passion of the women's movement helped define the agenda. Almost 30,000 representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) attended the NGO forum. The involvement of so many stakeholders gave enormous legitimacy and force to the Platform for Action and its call for action in 12 critical areas of concern.

Fifteen years on, we must assess how far we have come. We can learn from the developing and developed countries that have made significant progress in areas such as education, participation in decision-making, maternal health and ending violence against women. There are many good and promising practices to build on, from legislative change, policy development and capacity-building to sector-specific initiatives and efforts to improve data collection. The challenge is to expand and apply such practices more systematically, replicate them wherever possible and use them as the basis for better policies and programmes.

We also need to be self-critical. We need to acknowledge and address the many shortfalls and challenges. We need to close the gap between law, policy and aspiration on the one hand, and the daily realities of billions of women and girls on the other.

From Bangkok to Banjul, the regional review meetings have highlighted where we need to intensify all our efforts. We need to promote women's economic empowerment, including by increasing women's access to economic and financial resources and social protection systems. We need to increase women's participation in all areas of decision-making, repeal laws and eradicate discriminatory policies and practices. Sensitivity to gender must feature in policymaking, budgeting and data collection. Women need better access to health services, including reproductive health, and we must eliminate violence against women and girls. This is the most common, most shameful and least punished crime in the world.

In the past 15 years, understanding has grown that the empowerment of women and girls is not just a

goal in itself, but is key to all our international development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The impact of recent multiple global crises on women and girls has further heightened this understanding. We must therefore rethink past policies and strategies for growth and development.

Let me turn now to the central role of the General Assembly itself in promoting women's empowerment. In 1979, the Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In 2000, a special session of the Assembly adopted a political declaration (resolution S-23/2) building on the Beijing Declaration, and over the years the Assembly's resolutions on women in development and violence against women have been groundbreaking.

This year, the Assembly is working to realize a long-held dream — the establishment of a composite entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women. A new and well-funded gender entity will allow the United Nations system to better support Member States to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The Secretary-General and I are encouraged by the Assembly's strong support and urge it to move swiftly.

We are all determined to finish the task set out in Beijing. At this session, throughout the year and at the Millennium Development Goals summit in September, let our actions be guided by the principle of equality between women and men as outlined in the Charter. Let us achieve development and peace for all women and girls everywhere. The Secretary-General and I will continue to assist the Assembly in this endeavour.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Equatorial Guinea, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea): Upon taking the floor on behalf of the African Group to mark the 15 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, allow me to reiterate the condolences and solidarity of the African Group to the Government and people of Haiti and Chile for the tragedies caused by the devastating effects of the earthquakes that took place in those countries.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is a landmark document, and Africa in particular played a critical role in its formulation. We wish to acknowledge the Honourable Mrs. Gertrude Mongella, a daughter of Africa, for her role in steering the Fourth World Conference on Women to its successful conclusion.

As we commemorate the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, we need to recognize that it represents the culmination of the efforts to promote equality for women that we started at the United Nations World Conference on Women in Mexico and followed through in Copenhagen and Nairobi. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is our blueprint for action. We should preserve the consensus and commitments we achieved in Beijing.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action recognizes that gender equality and the empowerment of women are key to development, peace and human rights — the pillars upon which the United Nations stands. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action further recognized that women are full and equal partners; that it is imperative that gender be mainstreamed in all policies and programmes, not only in our countries, but also throughout the entire United Nations system; and that women have to be at the centre of all decision-making processes. We thus need to accelerate our efforts. It is now time to turn commitments into action so that gender equality and women's empowerment become realities.

Since Beijing, Africa has made great strides in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. At this juncture, I wish to underscore the contribution of African women to development. African women are known for their resilience and for shaping the destiny of their families through their unwavering determination, hard work and creativity. However, despite the progress and women's contribution, constraints and challenges remain in fully realizing the objectives of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Africa has therefore declared the years 2010 to 2020 as the Decade for African Women. We invite the United Nations family and the international community to work with us to make the African Union women's decade a success.

In recognizing that we have to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Programme of Action, Africa now has in place the

Banjul Declaration on the Strategies for the Acceleration of the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action. The Declaration has seven strategic areas on which to focus action. They are the economic empowerment of women through poverty reduction, employment creation, social protection and information and telecommunications technologies; peace, security and development; violence against women; the representation and participation of women in all areas of decision-making; sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS; climate change and food insecurity; and financing for gender equality.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women are central to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed goals. It is therefore imperative that the review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action contribute to the annual ministerial review of the Economic and Social Council and its theme of implementing internationally agreed goals and commitments with regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women, to be held in July 2010, and to the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly that will focus on accelerating progress towards the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, to be held from 20 to 22 September 2010.

In conclusion, the African Group reiterates its commitment to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. While national Governments have the primary responsibility for the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, international cooperation is needed to support national efforts in that endeavour. We therefore call for concerted efforts to fully realize gender equality and the full empowerment of women in all political, social, economic and cultural spheres.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): First of all, let me express the condolences of the Asian Group to the people and Government of Chile and all those who suffered during the recent devastating earthquake.

On behalf of the Asian Group, it is an honour for me to address this historic gathering to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration. In September 1995, we gathered in Beijing for the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Today, 15 years later, we come together again to commemorate the occasion, acknowledge the progress made and the challenges ahead, and pay tribute to the ideals embodied in the Beijing Platform for Action.

In Beijing, we unequivocally declared our shared determination to advance the goals of equality, development and peace for all women everywhere, in the interest of all humankind. We recognized the persistent inequalities between men and women and the repercussions they have on societies, and we acknowledged that the situation was exacerbated by the abject poverty that affects the lives of many of the world's people, in particular woman and children. We concluded by dedicating ourselves to addressing those constraints and obstacles. Perhaps more important, we recognized the urgency of that endeavour and the need for collective determination and cooperation in the tasks ahead.

In assessing our progress in implementing the commitments we made to the world's women in Beijing, we realize that much progress has been made but that considerable obstacles remain that hobble and dehumanize women throughout the world. Women's rights are progressive and evolving. Since the Beijing Conference, men and women throughout the world have become ever more aware of the inequities that women endure, and they have spoken up to demand change. It is that demand that has brought about improved recognition of women's rights in each country's legal system and here at the United Nations.

Furthermore, the Beijing Conference cemented the notion that it is unacceptable to differentiate between women's rights and human rights. But still, in many countries around the world, women are not safe from the threats of domestic violence, continued discrimination and wide-ranging socio-economic barriers. We must continue our efforts towards the implementation of the Beijing Declaration.

But progress has been made through the concerted efforts of the international community and national Governments, and in part through the action of women and girls themselves. According to the World Bank, for the first time, women in South Asia now live longer than men. That improvement in women's

longevity is an indicator of better treatment of women and girls and a valued outcome identified in the Beijing Platform for Action. In addition, high economic growth has led to a significant reduction in gender gaps in the labour markets of Asian and Pacific nations.

In the political realm, Asia, where women political leaders are more prevalent than anywhere else, has certainly made progress through the introduction of quota systems to increase women's representation in political governance structures. For example, in my country of Afghanistan, where the misogynistic Taliban once ruled and women were deprived of their very basic human rights, constitutional law now stipulates that 27 per cent of all seats in Parliament must be filled by women.

Undoubtedly, because of our actions over the past three decades, women's issues have gained prominence on the international and national development agendas. Attention has gone not only to the plight of poor and disenfranchised women in developing countries, but also to the unfinished gender agenda in more developed countries, such as addressing women's representation in higher-paying jobs and management positions and reducing the prevalence of gender-based violence.

We gather here today to commemorate this special occasion and to celebrate a cause and the progress made. But, more important, we are here to realize that our job is not finished and that there are new and existing challenges. We have come a long way since the Conference in Beijing. We shall be ruthlessly unyielding in our pursuit of ensuring that our mothers, our sisters and our daughters are treated with equality, respect and dignity.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Sergeyev (Ukraine): Today, our hearts and thoughts are with our Chilean friends who lost relatives and shelter. We express our deep sympathy to the Government of Chile and to the nation as a whole.

It is a particular honour for me to take the floor on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the outcomes of the Fourth World Conference on Women. This General Assembly commemorative event gives us an ideal opportunity to assess how far Member States have come in fulfilling their promises to address the shortcomings, face new challenges and reaffirm their commitments to fairness, justice, health and opportunities for the whole human race.

Members of the Eastern European Group reaffirm their commitments to the Beijing documents, which constitute an overarching policy framework, and attach particular significance to their effective implementation. We consider gender equality, gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women to be not only important objectives, but also means for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and an essential part of the development agenda.

Undoubtedly, there has been progress in implementing the Beijing outcomes. Violence against women is now illegal almost everywhere. In many countries, new health strategies have saved thousands of women's lives. A record number of women have become leaders and decision-makers, in particular here at the United Nations. There has been worldwide mobilization against female genital mutilation and cutting, as well as violence and killings in the name of honour and other harmful practices. Above all, more countries have come to understand that women's equality is a prerequisite for development.

Much has been accomplished, but much remains to be achieved. Women and girls still face multiple forms of discrimination, which are often the result of laws, policies, customs and practices that restrict women's opportunities to participate fully in development processes and in public, political and private life.

As we review the Platform for Action, we would like to emphasize that when we speak of the empowerment of women we should address the feminization of poverty, violence against women — physical, psychological or sexual; at home, on the street or in situations of armed conflict — and the trafficking of women and girls.

Women's health rights remain curtailed by poor access to health care, while maternal and infant mortality remain unacceptably high in many countries. There are very few effective programmes to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic among women in many parts of the world, especially in Africa.

Women's representation remains low in political and economic life; in general, it remains marginal in

public and private sector employment. Women are very poorly represented at higher levels of decision-making, preventive diplomacy, conflict-resolution negotiations and post-conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction. Perhaps the most insidious barrier to women's equal participation in leadership roles is the persistence of stereotypes of women, which perpetuate discrimination and entrenched prejudices.

These challenges can be met only if we enable women to build on the best this world has to offer, rather than condemn them to suffer the worst of it. That means, above all, that women must be educated and enabled to play their part in the global economy and in the lives of their families, communities and States.

The Eastern European Group thanks the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General for their leadership and crucial support for gender reform and the promotion of the Beijing agenda. We recognize the vital importance of a strengthened United Nations gender architecture in advancing women's rights, and believe that the new entity will bring an important shift to the work of the United Nations in the area of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

It is also imperative to involve all actors in the implementation of the gender agenda: men and women in general, Governments, parliaments and civil society, including the private sector, social partners, non-governmental organizations and international, regional, national and local institutions. We must all work together in a global partnership, bringing our skills and resources together to achieve our common purpose.

It has been said that women hold up half the sky. Let us not forget that there are still a great number of things for women to do here on the ground. They manufacture textiles and computers, give birth to children and raise them; write books, cultivate the land, govern people's lives, support our families, and invest for the future. Let us, together, help them. Let us strive to live up to the expectations of billions of women throughout the world. Let us offer a clear vision for the future and bold ideas that will help ensure a future brighter, kinder, more peaceful and prosperous for all — a future in which women are healthy and educated, free from violence, have a chance to live, work and enjoy life as full and equal partners in society, and in which their children, their families and their communities flourish.

We need strong political will, abundant energy and extraordinary spirit to move it forward and demonstrate that empowering women means better lives not only for women, but for everyone on the planet — men and women alike.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Panama, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. Harris (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to address the Assembly on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, whose members have requested that I convey to the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women our sincerest congratulations on his appointment. We are confident that his leadership will guarantee the greatest success for the work of the Commission's fifty-fourth session.

In the same capacity, my delegation has the honour to express its solidarity with and condolences to the people and Government of the Republic of Chile and regrets the loss of lives as a result of the strong earthquake that affected southern Chile, causing hundreds of deaths, leaving thousands homeless and causing extremely serious material damage.

Today we commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the global framework for gender equality, the human rights of women and the empowerment of women and girls. On this occasion, Member States will have the opportunity to share their experiences and good practices with a view to overcoming remaining obstacles, including those related to the Millennium Development Goals.

The Group of Latin American and Caribbean States thanks the Secretary-General for all the reports prepared in the context of this meeting, and in particular that on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, published as document E/CN.6/2010/2*.

The Group of Latin American and Caribbean States also thanks the Division for Gender Affairs of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean for preparing document LC/L.3175, entitled "Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome

of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly in Latin American and Caribbean Countries". This document reflects the progress, achievements and challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean in the 15 years since the adoption of the Platform for Action at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

As we face the future, there remain many unresolved issues with respect to the advancement of women and achieving gender equality. The lack of technical and financial resources is a persistent obstacle. Among other things, it is necessary to increase commitment and political will to implement actions, to prioritize gender mechanisms at the highest level of the State, to increase and more broadly distribute relevant budgets, and to create systems of accountability that allow for ongoing monitoring of how countries are fulfilling their commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action.

The members of the Group of Latin America and Caribbean States are ready to work constructively to ensure the success of the new review process and the effectiveness of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Germany, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States.

Mr. Kues (Germany): It is my particular honour today to address the General Assembly on behalf of Group of Western European and Others States as we gather on the fifteenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995.

Fifteen years is a long time. Members of the young generation who were born in the 1990s may wonder why we still assemble to commemorate a document adopted at a diplomatic conference held one and a half decades ago. They may ask why they should still care about an action plan that is 15 years old. So what will we tell them?

We can point out to them that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is still the only universally agreed basis for concrete action for the betterment of the lives of women around the world. We can recall that it was worked out in a long and arduous negotiation process that included regional preparatory conferences which addressed the needs and concerns of women in the different regions of the world in a very specific way — namely, their own. We can tell them that it was done with the full participation of non-governmental organizations, and we can assure them that for all these reasons the importance of Beijing remains unsurpassed.

The World Conference put gender issues at the top of the political agenda once and for all. The Conference and the implementation process ever since — in our countries, in regional and other organizations, and in the work of the Commission on the Status of Women — have sparked enormous political interest in these issues. Beijing mobilized international organizations, national Governments, local authorities and non-governmental organizations on an unprecedented scale. And the follow-up process to Beijing has sustained that interest until this very day.

But let us also be honest with them. We must admit that many of the goals defined in the Platform as critical areas of concern remain unattained in many places. Many of the hopes and promises underlying the Platform remain unfulfilled. Action as agreed in Beijing is still urgently needed everywhere.

More needs to be done to enable women and men to share responsibilities and to balance work, family and private life during the whole lifecycle. Today, many new elements in women's lifecycles — such as longer life expectancy, a greater variety of vocational and career stages, changed patterns in raising children and care of the elderly — entail major changes in their living arrangements. Equality policy must strive to create the adequate social, economic and political framework to accommodate these changes.

More needs to be done to create access to health services for women and to give women and girls equal access to education and vocational training. More needs to be done to enable women worldwide to participate fully in political and economic life and to achieve economic independence. And more needs to be done to encourage men to choose new role models.

Last but not least, more needs to be done to combat and prevent the many forms of violence against women and girls, to empower and protect women during and after armed conflict, and to contribute to the prosecution of perpetrators. From today's point of view, we could add that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing documents will also be essential if we want to find sustainable answers to such

global challenges as the economic, financial and food crises and climate change.

That is why the countries of the Western European and Others Group see this event today as more than just a festive commemoration. We see this event first of all as an opportunity to underline once again our own full commitment to the outcomes of the Conference. And we find it, therefore, more than fitting that the General Assembly itself should also reconfirm once again the value and importance of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Both texts must continue to guide us in our future work at all levels and in all regions.

One level at which much of the action required can be induced and coordinated is, of course, the United Nations. Here, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women plays an important role as it deals with many of the issues raised in Beijing from a human rights perspective. We also saw the Security Council step in and adopt an important text on the empowerment of women a decade ago, namely, resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security.

In implementing all these decisions, big challenges remain for the Organization's membership and the United Nations system. But there is one issue where real progress seems to be at hand. Proposals to reform the internal gender architecture of the United Nations are on the table and, if we were to agree on them quickly at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, we could give a real boost to the Beijing agenda and the empowerment of women.

I hope that in the coming days the Commission will prepare the grounds for the future implementation of the outcomes of the Beijing Conference. Let us continue to take Beijing as what it promised to be — our platform for action.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, who will speak on behalf of the host country.

Ms. Frank (United States of America): Mr. President, I would like to thank you for the honour of speaking here today on behalf of the host country and also as one of the only women taking the floor today with the Deputy Secretary-General. It is a great honour.

The United States applauds the progress made to improve the status of women since the Fourth World Conference on Women. We recognize, however, that there are significant obstacles to progress. We welcome the opportunity to highlight some of those challenges. Some obstacles to the well-being of women and girls, including poverty, lack of education and maternal and child health, remain to this day, but new challenges have arisen, such as efforts to exploit persons through human trafficking, rising rates of HIV/AIDS and rape as a weapon of war.

A priority of the Obama Administration is to advance maternal and child health. Each year, over half a million women die in childbirth because of complications for which effective and low-cost treatments exist. The United States Government has partnered with Member States, non-governmental organizations and others to reduce the number of maternal deaths. We have now lowered the maternal mortality rate by 30 to 50 per cent in several Asian, African and Middle Eastern countries. To further improve those results, Governments need to increase women's access to skilled birth attendants who can address the complications of pregnancies and ensure that sufficient drugs and other necessary supplies are available to prevent and treat obstetric complications.

Progress has also been made in increasing access to education. The ratio of girls to boys in schools has increased, but girls often drop out of school because they are forced to marry early or because they must work to support their families. Our task is to address the factors that prevent girls from completing their education.

The Beijing Platform for Action recognizes that de facto and de jure discrimination against women must end. As women continue to lack access to control over resources, it is essential to enact and enforce laws that guarantee women's rights to own and to inherit land and property. The United Nations has adopted resolutions that address this topic, including a 2005 resolution of the former Commission on Human Rights. A mechanism is needed to examine discriminatory laws against women from a multidisciplinary perspective and to provide technical assistance to Member States to address the issue. The consensus adoption by the Human Rights Council at its September 2009 session of resolution 12/17 on the elimination of discrimination against women was an important first step in that regard. The United States

hopes that efforts will continue and result in the creation of a new mechanism.

While rape in conflict situations is hardly a new phenomenon, Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1880 (2009), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009) have called attention to the particularly egregious situation of systematic rape and the use of military force in order to advance military and political objectives. Those resolutions emphasize that Governments have a responsibility to protect their citizens. When Governments become perpetrators rather than protectors, their citizens have no recourse within their own country.

We welcome the appointment of Margot Wallström as Special Representative of the Secretary-General to coordinate efforts to end sexual violence in armed conflict situations. We also appreciate the efforts of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Development Programme to deploy teams of experts to help Governments to take measures to end sexual violence in conflict-related situations, improve accountability and end impunity. A further step needed is to increase the number of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations. The inclusion of women in security forces inspires confidence among the women whom they serve and encourages victims to report sexual and gender-based crimes.

The issue of HIV/AIDS disproportionately affects women and girls. HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death of women aged 15 to 44 worldwide, and gender-based violence is a major cause of increased risk of HIV infection. With its prevention, treatment and care programmes, the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is an example of a Government programme that takes a comprehensive approach to gender. It examines a range of issues, including the role of men and boys, the impact of gender-based violence, and the need for integrated health services that allow women comprehensive care that includes services such as family planning, HIV testing and pregnancy care. Moving forward under its new strategy and as part of the President's Global Health Initiative, PEPFAR will increase its investment in programmes that strengthen country-specific gender responses.

At the time of the Beijing Conference, human trafficking was not a widely recognized crime. We now understand that human trafficking affects both individuals and societies. Trafficking not only traumatizes the victims physically and psychologically, but also threatens the public health, strains social services and encourages organized crime. To help those subjected to trafficking, we need to improve their access to victim services in order to ensure that they are able to reintegrate into society. Increased public-private partnerships and a growing focus on corporate social responsibility help boost anti-trafficking capabilities.

In closing, let me reiterate the United States Government's support for reform of the United Nations gender-related institutions. We urge Member States to build on resolution 63/311 and to adopt another General Assembly resolution defining the entity's mandate, staffing and organization, how it will be funded, how it will coordinate with other United Nations bodies and whom it will report to. Although it may take considerable thought to resolve such issues, we must make that effort now. The sooner the unified gender entity is up and running, the sooner all countries will benefit. Developing nations will benefit from technical assistance, which will bring improvements on the ground. All countries will stand to gain from the new entity's efforts to empower women by acting to increase their political participation and by upholding women's rights.

There have been tremendous accomplishments since the Fourth World Conference on Women, but there are still significant challenges ahead. We look forward to working together with Member nations to realize the promise of Beijing.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia, who will speak also in his capacity as Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Mr. Nazarian (Armenia) (Chairperson, Commission on the Status of Women): It is a particular privilege for my country, Armenia, to represent the Commission on the Status of Women at the General Assembly. I join all previous speakers in expressing our solidarity with the people and the Government of Chile.

I have the honour to speak in my capacity as the Chair of the Commission at this commemorative meeting of the General Assembly to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration

and Platform for Action. On behalf of the Commission, I thank the Assembly for convening this commemorative event to confirm the role that the Platform for Action has played and continues to play at all levels for the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, and to contribute to the momentum towards closing the gap between commitment and action and between policy and implementation.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and its 12 critical areas of concern provide clear and concrete guidance on eliminating persistent gender inequalities. In the past 15 years, that landmark document has been the inspiration and blueprint in leading to significant advances for women and girls worldwide. We have cause to celebrate the achievements, but cannot lose sight of the fact that much more remains to be accomplished before the goals of equality, development and peace are truly achieved for all women everywhere. I strongly believe that we are committed to achieving those goals. The time for action is now.

This morning, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted a declaration of the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women. Representatives of Governments reaffirmed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (A/S-23/2) and committed to the full and accelerated implementation of those key policy instruments. Governments also recognized the link between the implementation of the Platform for Action and fulfilment of the obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The Commission has invited the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, to endorse that declaration, and we look forward to relevant action in due course.

Promising practices exist that can be drawn on, scaled up or replicated in order to move forward the gender equality agenda. We need to galvanize the efforts of all stakeholders towards strategic partnerships, improved collaboration and participatory processes to achieve measurable positive outcomes for women and girls.

2010 is a critical year for gender equality and, as the President has said, there cannot be progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals without progress on gender equality. Let us seize all the opportunities at the national, regional and global levels and give new impetus to the promotion of gender equality and women's enjoyment of their basic human rights.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item. I now declare concluded the commemorative meeting to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 62?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

United Nations A/64/PV.74

General Assembly

Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

74th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 2 March 2010, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Acharya (Nepal), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 136 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/64/631/Add.5)

The Acting President: I should like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/64/631/Add.5, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communications contained in documents A/64/631 and Add.1, Add.2, Add.3 and Add.4, the Federated States of Micronesia has made the necessary payment to reduce its arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter. May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in this document?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 46 (*continued*)

Global road safety crisis

Note by the Secretary-General (A/64/266)

Draft resolution (A/64/L.44/Rev.1*)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to Mr. Victor Kiryanov, Colonel-General, Chief, Road Traffic Safety Department, Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.44/Rev.1*.

Mr. Kiryanov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Today's consideration of the issue of road safety is of the utmost importance in the context the efforts being made by the international community in the field of development. Mortality and injury in road accidents are not only a major global public health problem; they also have a negative impact on the social and economic progress of Member States and their implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

The data contained in the World Health Organization (WHO) report (see A/64/266) is alarming. Nearly 1.3 million people die every year and between 20 million and 50 million suffer injuries as a result of road traffic crashes. Road traffic injuries are among the three leading causes of death for people between the ages of five and 44 years. According to expert estimates, global losses due to road traffic injuries total $518 billion and cost Governments between 1 and 3 per cent of their countries' gross national product.

Recognition by the international community of the gravity of the road safety issue has given a strong impetus to robust action by Governments, with the support by the United Nations, other international organizations, the World Bank, regional development banks and others at the national, regional and international levels. Civil society and charity organizations have also played an active role in raising awareness and mobilizing joint international efforts. We would be remiss not to also mention the key role

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played in this process by the Commission for Global Road Safety chaired by Lord Robertson, and by the International Automobile Federation.

An important step forward in promoting global interaction in this field was made by the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, held in Moscow in November and attended by high-level delegations from more than 150 States. Let me express our gratitude to all the countries, international organizations and other key partners that contributed to the preparatory work and to the successful outcome of the forum.

The Moscow Conference established a solid basis for our future joint work to ensure global road safety. It would be no exaggeration to say that the international cooperation in this field has reached a fundamentally new level. We do not attribute the success of the meeting to the efforts of Russia alone. We are perfectly aware that its success was ensured through the active participation of Member States; our colleagues from the Sultanate of Oman, who for many years have actively promoted the issue of road safety in the United Nations; our partners in the United Nations system, above all, WHO and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe; as well as non-governmental organizations and civil society. The meeting was the culmination of an intensive public awareness campaign called "Make roads safe" and the meticulous preparatory work of the many partners involved.

Addressing the Conference, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev emphasized that road safety is one of the major challenges to international development and that a common strategy and joint efforts are required to ensure global road safety. It is high time that the international community agreed to act through coordinated efforts to overcome the consequences of the global financial crisis.

The adoption of the Moscow declaration proposing that the United Nations proclaims the period 2011-2020 as a decade of action for road safety was the main outcome of the Conference. In this regard, I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Improving global road safety" and contained in document A/64/L.44/Rev.1*, which was reissued for technical reasons on 1 March 2010. In addition to the initial 78 sponsors of the draft resolution, the following States have joined as additional sponsors: Albania, Australia, Bahrain, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Iraq, Ireland, Japan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Malta, Mauritius, Montenegro, Qatar, Spain, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America.

The text of the draft resolution was agreed through open consultations among Member States. We are grateful to all partners for their substantive proposals and amendments and their constructive approach, flexibility and readiness to compromise. Today, we are pleased to say that the General Assembly has before it a serious and comprehensive document that addresses all key aspects of the road safety agenda. Let me now briefly introduce the text of the draft resolution.

Among other things, the document notes that the General Assembly has welcomed the Moscow declaration adopted at the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety. It proclaims the period 2011-2020 as the Decade of Action for Road Safety, with a goal to stabilize and then reduce the forecast level of road traffic fatalities around the world by increasing activities conducted at the national, regional and global levels. It calls upon Member States to implement road safety activities, particularly in the areas of road safety management, road infrastructure, vehicle safety, road user behaviour, including distractions in traffic, road safety education and post-crash care, including rehabilitation for people with disabilities. It also invites States to set their own national road traffic casualty reduction targets to be achieved by the end of the Decade.

The draft resolution also requests WHO and the United Nations regional commissions, in cooperation with other partners in the United Nations Global Road Safety Collaboration, to prepare a plan of action on practical steps to be taken, including knowledge-sharing and best practices in the areas of health care, education and transport; improving and harmonizing national road safety legislation; and the establishment of a working group of interested countries and international organizations to mobilize resources for road safety activities. The draft resolution also calls for the holding of a midterm review of the progress made in the implementation of the Moscow declaration.

The road safety agenda is an area of international cooperation with enduring human value. There is no place for political disputes or tension in this field. All of us must share the common goal of preserving human

life. Our joint efforts to reduce road injury rates at the national and international levels can not only help to prevent the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people; it can also contribute to the social and economic development of countries, especially low- and middle-income countries, including in the context of achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

The Moscow Conference gave us a good, robust start. For our part, I underscore our determination to maintain that accelerated pace with regard to practical steps to improve road safety. I call on all delegations to support the draft resolution and invite all Member States to join as sponsors.

Mr. Al-Hinai (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his note transmitting the report on improving global road safety (A/64/266), prepared by the World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with the United Nations regional commissions and other partners of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration. I would also like to thank the members of the Collaboration, under the able guidance of the WHO, for their great contribution to the report's contents.

The report provides an update on the status of the implementation of the recommendations contained in resolutions 58/289, 60/5 and 62/244 on improving global road safety. It describes ongoing activities and the series of global road safety developments that have taken place in the course of the past two years. It also recognizes the significant impact that collaborative efforts have had on the implementation of road safety measures, and points to the growing recognition by Governments that action to improve road safety is an urgent matter. Sadly, the report also notes that road traffic injuries continue to jeopardize the advances made around the world in the areas of health and development. It also includes several recommendations for the Assembly's consideration.

Since the adoption of resolution 62/244, several meetings, workshops and commemorative events have taken place, including the publication of major reports. In that connection, I would like to pay special tribute to the excellent work of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration, a consortium of four partners: the FIA Foundation, the Global Road Safety Partnership, the World Bank and WHO. The Collaboration has provided valuable guidance to countries on how to implement good practices in the area of road safety.

Through its working group on road traffic safety, the Economic Commission for Europe recently published an updated version of the consolidated resolutions on road traffic, signs and signals. Those resolutions constitute reference tools that provide guidelines to improve road safety, which are to be implemented by countries on a voluntary basis.

Three major reports were published in 2008 and 2009. In 2008, WHO and UNICEF launched the *World Report on Child Injury Prevention*, whose findings indicate that road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death among children aged 10 to 19 years of age. In 2009, the Commission for Global Road Safety launched the report entitled *Make Roads Safe: A Decade of Action for Road Safety*. That report proposed a global target to reduce by 50 per cent the 2020 forecast of road deaths. It is estimated that achieving that target would save 5 million lives and prevent 50 million serious injuries during the coming decade. In 2009, WHO launched the *Global Status Report on Road Safety*, which is the first global assessment to draw from a standardized survey that included data received from 178 countries.

The United Nations regional commissions have continued to contribute positively to regional efforts to improve road safety. Meetings and workshops have been organized by the Economic Commission for Europe, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Economic Commission for Africa and the Road Safety Forum for Ibero-America and the Caribbean. All of these organizations, commissions and stakeholders could not continue to provide such valuable service to our countries without the generous financial support provided by the World Bank, the Global Road Safety Facility, the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, the Governments of the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Australia and the United States, the Bloomberg Philanthropies, Michelin, Johnson & Johnson and Scania.

During his annual meet-the-people tour in 2009, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said met with the people of the district of Sohar and spoke to them about road accidents and their impact on the social lives of citizens. His Majesty stated:

> "While we believe that life and death are destined by Allah, we know that the Almighty has ordained that people should not cast themselves upon perils. Some may die in these accidents, and

> others who survive may be disabled and become a burden on themselves, their families and their society. Therefore, we should join hands and be aware of this issue."

During his speech, His Majesty the Sultan urged everyone to make this issue a subject of discussion in their families. Road safety, he said, should be discussed and public awareness stressed in order to limit the number of road accidents, which are an obstacle to progress, growth and civilization.

His Majesty the Sultan affirmed in his speech that the relevant authorities, in particular the Royal Oman Police, are carrying out their duties and raising public awareness. They will do even more in the future, as they have instructions to step up their efforts to address this unfortunate phenomenon, which should be limited as much as possible. His Majesty went on to say:

> "[Road accidents] may be caused by a number of factors, but the human factor is the main cause. They may be caused by negligence in maintaining one's vehicle or a desire to reach one's destination as fast as possible. But it is better to arrive safely than on a stretcher or in the emergency room."

Further underscoring the importance of road safety, he stated:

> "I advise everyone to attach great importance to this issue. There is no doubt that all sectors of Omani society are listening to what I am saying from this blessed place. This is an important issue that continues to have an impact on Omani society."

Here, I would like to highlight the steps implemented by the Government of Oman at the national level. These include the enactment of legislation, the establishment of a national road safety agency, the updating of comprehensive regulations to meet the needs of the injured and their rehabilitation, and the creation of a registry of detailed information on the consequences of injuries in order to minimize the impact of accidents and with the ultimate goal of creating for our citizens an environment conducive to achieving further social and economic development. The Royal Oman Police has organized and participated in a number of events in its ongoing efforts to raise awareness of road safety issues. It has thus participated in both the Gulf Cooperation Council Traffic Week and the Arab Traffic Week.

The Directorate General of Traffic of the Royal Oman Police established the Road Safety Institute in 2006. Its mission is to train traffic officers. The Institute conducts a number of training programmes for driving instructors, taxi drivers and public transportation vehicle drivers. It also conducts programmes on first aid, administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation and defensive driving.

To ensure the safety of drivers and pedestrians alike, the Royal Oman Police is sparing no effort to ensure that traffic regulations are complied with. As speeding is the major cause of road accidents, resulting in 53 per cent of accidents in Oman, the Royal Oman Police has installed high-quality, fixed-speed radar detectors on all lit dual carriageways, and mobile speed radar detectors have been provided to all police departments in the provinces and regions of Oman. Since the installation of the radar speed detectors, there has been a significant decrease in the rate of speed violations.

The Royal Oman Police is also concerned about the road-worthiness of vehicles and has established vehicle inspection stations in all of Oman's regions. Those stations are equipped with the most modern technology and systems used in vehicle inspections.

With the increase in the number of vehicles and road users, it is important that rules and regulations be brought into line with the accelerating developments in all aspects of life. Traffic laws have been amended to address new and unfamiliar patterns of traffic behaviour.

Two years ago, this Assembly adopted resolution 62/244, which called for the holding of the first global high-level conference on road safety in Moscow. On 19 and 20 November 2009, thousands of representatives from all over the world came to Moscow, where, for the first time, delegations of ministers and representatives dealing with transport, health, education, safety and related traffic law enforcement issues met to discuss progress made in implementing the recommendations of the *World report on road traffic injury prevention* and the General Assembly's resolutions on improving global road safety. The Conference unanimously adopted the Moscow Declaration, which proclaimed the period 2011-2020 as the Decade of Action for Road Safety.

with the goal of stabilizing and then reducing the level of road traffic fatalities around the world.

The Assembly has before it a draft resolution contained in document A/64/L.44/Rev.1*, in which the Assembly would endorse the recommendations of the Moscow Declaration. My delegation is a proud sponsor of the draft resolution and commends it to the Assembly for adoption.

Mr. Oyarzun (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and Iceland, State member of the European Economic Area, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Armenia all join this declaration.

The European Union welcomes the imminent adoption by consensus of resolution A/64/L.44/Rev.1*, entitled "Improving global road safety". We also note with satisfaction the large number of countries that have decided to sponsor the draft resolution, which demonstrates the relevance and timeliness of this issue and its importance to the international community. We express our special gratitude to the delegation of the Russian Federation for its leadership and efforts in this accomplishment.

As noted by the World Health Organization, road traffic injuries are a major public health problem and a leading cause of death and injury around the world. In the case of the European Union, involvement in a road accident is the leading cause of death or hospitalization for our citizens under 45 years. With 39,000 road traffic deaths in 2008 and socio-economic costs of around 2 per cent of gross domestic product, amounting to €180 billion, road safety continues to be an area for priority action in the European Union.

In 2003 the European Union set the goal of halving the number of deaths due to road accidents to approximately 27,000 deaths by 2010. It is a difficult goal to achieve. In December 2009, the European Commission hosted a conference to conclude a public consultation exercise preceding the drafting of the European Road Safety Action Programme 2011-2020. More than 400 stakeholders of varied backgrounds participated. Regional and multilateral institutions, development banks and civil society played an essential role.

The European Road Safety Action Programme 2011-2020 is aimed at keeping the European Union demanding and determined in our fight against road accidents. It will guide the efforts of the European Union in the coming decade. The new Action Programme will focus on key priorities such as accidents in rural roads, which account for 60 per cent of the total number of deaths, and vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and the elderly.

In addition, we will continue building on our previous commitments, including by strengthening controls and penalties, adopting initiatives at the national level to combat driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, investing in road infrastructure, improving road traffic conditions, and improving legislation on drivers' licenses and fitness standards for driving.

The Moscow Declaration, adopted at the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, held in Moscow from 19 to 20 November 2009, and the subsequent proclamation of 2011-2020 as the Decade of Action for Road Safety are proof of the international commitment to keeping road safety high on the political agenda. We need to continue adopting wide-ranging, revised approaches and exchanging information and best practices at the national, regional and global levels, with the active participation of civil society and private sector. The international community cannot be lax on road safety because every year hundreds of thousands of human lives are at stake.

Ms. Yeoh (Malaysia): I am incredibly touched and humbled to be here at the United Nations for this historic meeting. I am immensely grateful to the Government of Malaysia for affording me this opportunity and privilege to speak on behalf of Malaysia, as well as the "Make roads safe" campaign.

For me, as a little girl growing up in Ipoh, Malaysia, the United Nations was something far and distant that represented our best and greatest hopes for the world. It still does. As members probably know, I am an actress, but of all the roles that I have played and all the villains I have defeated, sometimes with pretty cool martial arts moves, nothing has been as important or fulfilling as the role I have played on behalf of the "Make roads safe" campaign.

Just over a year ago, I helped to launch the call for a decade of action for road safety with a march by

2,000 young children through the streets of Ho Chi Minh City in Viet Nam. Seeing so many children all in one place, each one with a bright, glowing future, brought home to me the true scale of this epidemic of unnecessary road deaths and preventable injuries. Every day, at least 2,000 children are killed or seriously injured on the world's roads. It is an unconscionable waste of energy, love and human potential.

Back then, I knew that we could not stand by any longer and allow this to continue. This feeling, this determination and this pledge to end this tragic waste of young lives were reinforced in every hospital ward I visited and every inconsolable mother I met grieving for a lost child. I know the General Assembly shares that determination.

In November in Moscow, the world came together to decide that the time had come for action. It was thrilling to see so many leaders from every corner of the globe committing to make road safety a priority. All of us who care about and have worked for safer roads have travelled a long journey together. Today is the latest and the greatest stage of that journey, when the United Nations shall proclaim a Decade of Action for Road Safety. This is a marvellous achievement.

Malaysia would like to express our gratitude to the Russian Federation and the Sultanate of Oman for their leadership in promoting critical issues at the United Nations.

Now the real work begins. The real challenge we face is to translate words contained in a resolution into real results — the only results that ultimately count: lives saved and injuries prevented.

I am so very proud that my country, Malaysia, is setting such a strong example. In September 2004, realizing the urgency and need to address road safety issues in a systematic and planned manner, the Government of Malaysia set up the Road Safety Department under the Ministry of Transport as a one-stop agency to coordinate, monitor and implement road safety programmes. The immediate task of the Department was to outline holistic strategies to reduce injuries and fatalities due to road crashes. This gave birth to the Road Safety Plan of Malaysia 2006 to 2010, based on the four "e"s: education, enforcement, engineering and environment.

The Government has also formulated a long-term policy called the "Zero Fatality Vision", which is a safety policy and philosophy that covers all aspects of safety including the driver, the road infrastructure and environmental safety. The ultimate aim of this vision is that nobody should be killed or seriously injured within the road environment due to crashes.

The Malaysian road safety agenda has come a long way in the past 13 years. The fatality index declined from 8.2 fatalities per 10,000 registered vehicles in 1996 to 3.5 fatalities per 10,000 registered vehicles in 2009. In addition, for the period 2004-2009, injury cases due to accidents as reported cases dropped by 42 per cent.

At the regional level, Malaysia has emerged as one of the leaders in road safety, as shown by its election as the Chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Multi-Sector Road Safety Working Group during the fifteenth ASEAN Land Transport Working Group Meeting held in May 2009 in Brunei. ASEAN Governments were encouraged to form national working groups to provide a reporting and implementation mechanism on the progress of road safety initiatives in respective member countries. The ASEAN Governments also agreed to build the capacity of non-governmental organizations to be more active in road safety and identify funding opportunities for road safety programmes.

The leadership that is being demonstrated by Malaysia is resulting in real change and improvement. I know in all certainty that the next decade will be a decade of action for road safety in Malaysia. Working together, we can create a new momentum to help to ensure that this kind of holistic and sustainable approach to road safety is a reality in many more countries.

I know that tomorrow the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration will meet to begin detailed planning for the Decade of Action. The generous funding of Bloomberg Philanthropies is now enabling an unprecedented scale of activity by the World Health Organization, the Global Road Safety Partnership and other partners. Spearheaded by the World Bank's Global Road Safety Facility, there is now a renewed attention to road safety in the multilateral development banks. And I am particularly grateful to Lord Robertson for his inspired leadership of the Commission for Global Road Safety, and to both him

and the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society for giving me the opportunity to continue to advocate for road safety as the Global Ambassador of the "Make roads safe" campaign. So I commit today to playing my role — the most important role of my career — in making this Decade of Action a success.

I think back to the children who marched alongside me in October 2008 at the beginning of the campaign for a Decade of Action. Now, it is for those children and the millions like them that we must act to make roads safe.

Mr. Gutiérrez (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): For developing countries, road traffic accidents represent one of the leading causes of premature death and constitute a public health problem that has effects on our development and impinges upon people's rights.

The data obtained by the World Health Organization (WHO) are worrying. It is unjustifiable that 1.2 million people die every year in traffic accidents — one of the leading causes of death for people aged between 5 and 44 years. It has been estimated that, unless action is taken immediately, at this rate road traffic accidents will become the fifth leading cause of death in the world by 2030. In the same context, according to the World Bank, children between the ages of 5 and 14 will be at greatest risk; for that group, traffic accidents will become the principal cause of death or injury by 2015.

As noted by the WHO, 90 per cent of such accidents occur in low- or medium-income countries. In my country, it must be said, the figures are chilling. Every day, 10 people die as a consequence of traffic accidents. Over the past decade, such accidents have caused the death of more than 32,000 people and injured more than 342,000. Every year, such accidents cause approximately 3,500 deaths; 78 per cent of victims are passersby, the majority of whom are poor. This generates further inequity, since accidents disproportionately affect people who cannot cope with their consequences, being unable to access health services or take on the costs of rehabilitation.

Likewise, traffic accidents do not only cause suffering and cut short lives; they also constitute an immense economic loss that has a serious impact on development in the country. According to data collected by the Ministry of Health of my country, Peru loses more than $1 billion a year due to traffic accidents.

We know that the main causes of traffic accidents are associated with speeding, reckless or drunk driving, mechanical failures, lack of caution on the part of pedestrians, poorly maintained road surfaces and the lack of signs and signals, among other things. This shows the need for urgent and concerted action to introduce legislative reforms, strengthen our ability to detect violations and impose penalties, ensure adequate logistical and technological support, improve road infrastructure and, above all, make people aware of road safety.

It is painful to acknowledge that traffic accidents are avoidable and that they are caused by a series of factors linked to State management and the activities of businesses and the community in general.

Faced with the gravity of this situation, Peru has introduced several measures, including the National Road Safety Plan, whose objective is to reduce traffic accidents by 30 per cent by 2011. The Plan has established six strategic objectives: promote a culture of respect for transport standards; involve the mass media in promoting road safety; develop verification and monitoring mechanisms for road infrastructure; review the legal framework; designing and implementing a reliable data-collection system; and strengthen the actions of the National Road Safety Council.

In the context of efforts to make improvements in developing and enforcing standards, starting in July this year Peru will have a new transportation code that will increase penalties. Furthermore, in August, Peru launched the 2009-2012 National Traffic Accident Health Strategy with the aim of reducing morbidity and mortality resulting from such accidents. The objectives of the Strategy include ensuring quality, timely and comprehensive care for people who are injured or disabled in road accidents.

The challenges for countries such as Peru in this area are complex, and to tackle them we need the help of the private sector and civil society, as well as the commitment of the international community and multilateral bodies. To that end, my country has co-sponsored and decisively supported the draft resolution that we shall adopt shortly.

As the Moscow declaration says, the global road safety crisis can be solved only through multisectoral cooperation and the formation of partnerships among all parties concerned in the public and private sectors,

with the participation of civil society. Furthermore, given the cross-cutting nature of this issue, addressing road safety can make a significant contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. We view these two concepts, which were integral to the negotiations, as being of crucial importance, and it is on their basis that we should work throughout the Decade of Action for Road Safety, from 2011 to 2020. In the same context, the action plan for the Decade, which has been endorsed by the WHO and the United Nations regional commissions as a guiding document in the implementation of the Decade's objectives, is also of particular importance.

The serious situation resulting from road traffic accidents demands an urgent moral and political commitment to guaranteeing road safety and ensuring that roads lead to progress, well-being and the development of our societies. In this context, my country is grateful to Russia and Oman for their initiative. We are firmly convinced of the need and we have the political will to continue working hand in hand with the entire international community to make progress towards this objective.

Mr. Sammis (United States of America): The United States is proud to co-sponsor draft resolution A/64/L.44/Rev.1*, "Improving global road safety". We thank the Government of Russia for its commitment to this critical issue. The Moscow Ministerial Conference on Global Road Safety in November and today's draft resolution are important steps towards making our roads safer. We also appreciate the efforts of the Government of Oman, the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration and the World Health Organization.

Each day, thousands of people die on the roads. Every year, tens of millions are injured. The majority of those affected are young people and those who live in developing countries. The human and economic costs are enormous.

To address that scourge, we must continue to push for increased helmet and seat-belt use, along with reductions in speeding and alcohol-impaired driving. We must build standardized systems for collecting and analysing crash data, promote the design of safer roads and vehicles, and implement laws and regulations that reflect best practices and standards. We must also address serious emerging challenges.

The United States is deeply concerned about the risks posed by distracted driving, particularly texting while driving. Last year in the United States, 6,000 people died on the roads and more than half a million were injured because of distracted or inattentive driving. If we do not act, the problem will only grow worse as the number of vehicles on our roadways rises and communication technologies, such as cell phones and texting devices, become even more widely available.

We recognize that new technologies have helped solve many global road safety challenges, even as they have distracted some drivers from the road. The United States believes that we must spur innovation and harness the promise of science and new technologies, but also work to minimize their accompanying perils.

We are pleased that this draft resolution recognizes the great risk posed by distracted driving, including texting while driving, and encourages Governments, public and private corporations and non-governmental and multilateral organizations to help reduce that danger.

On 1 October 2009, President Obama issued an executive order directing United States Government employees not to engage in text messaging while driving United States Government vehicles or privately-owned vehicles on official Government business, or while using electronic equipment supplied by the Government.

We encourage other Member States, along with the United Nations system, to join us in issuing similar directives to prohibit texting while driving. We also look forward to working with other countries to document efforts to reduce distracted driving and to develop guidance for further action.

The United States is committed to saving lives and reducing the devastation of driver accidents, and we look forward to working with Member States and the United Nations to make all of our roadways safer.

Mr. Singh Puri (India): At the outset, let me say how happy I am to see you, Sir, presiding over this meeting this afternoon. India welcomes the opportunity to participate in this debate on the important issue of road safety. We would like to thank the Government of the Russian Federation for its initiative in hosting the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety in Moscow in November last year. We would also like to express our appreciation to the Government of Oman for

its consistent support for this agenda item. India is pleased to co-sponsor draft resolution A/64/L.44/Rev.1*.

We have carefully gone through the report on improving global road safety (A/64/266), transmitted by the Secretary-General. We thank the World Health Organization (WHO) for preparing the report in consultation with regional commissions and other partners of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration.

According to the report, low- and middle-income countries witness over 90 per cent of the world's fatalities on the roads, despite accounting for only 48 per cent of the world's vehicles. Apart from the personal suffering that such road traffic injuries cause, they also threaten health and development gains. The importance of addressing road safety thus has a key development dimension. It is therefore encouraging that the United Nations has recognized road traffic injuries as an extensive and serious global health problem, requiring coordinated international cooperation efforts.

In India, road transport is the dominant mode of transportation, accounting for 70 per cent of freight movement and 85 per cent of passenger traffic. We have one of the largest road networks in the world, with 3.3 million kilometres of roads. National highways account for about 2 per cent of the country's road network, but carry 40 per cent of total traffic, leading to severe congestion.

Road traffic accidents claim over 80,000 victims a year, constituting a major public health problem, with considerable social and economic costs. Almost half of those who die in road traffic crashes are vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, cyclists or users of two-wheelers. India is therefore acutely conscious of the imperative to address road safety and reduce the adverse consequences of traffic accidents.

India's economic growth lies in part upon the rapid expansion of our infrastructure, including roads. We are actively engaged in efforts to enhance road safety. We believe that road safety requires the coordination of three aspects: engineering and design, enforcement, and education involving civil society to spread awareness. Our response entails a coordinated and multisectoral approach, incorporating relevant parts of the Government, civil society and the private sector. Our interventions seek to cover the following phases of road traffic injury control: the prevention of crashes and injuries in the first place, the provision of prompt and high-quality care to those injured in traffic crashes, and the provision of rehabilitation and long-term care to those who need it in order to minimize disabilities. We are striving to make road safety a health, transportation, law-enforcement, education and development priority.

The national highway system is being widened and strengthened under various schemes. Plans for the development of an Indian national expressway network in a phased manner by the year 2022 are currently under way. Many of the recommendations made in the WHO report are being used as a framework for addressing road safety.

We recognize the significance of strengthening capacity to collect, use and share road safety information. Legislation is being reviewed comprehensively to meet the emerging requirements of road safety. Information technology is also being used in the road transport sector, including through smartcard-based driving licences and registration certificates. We are also taking steps to develop a road safety culture in the country. The twenty-first annual road safety week was observed from 1 to 7 January this year throughout the country, involving regional governments, voluntary organizations and vehicle manufacturers.

International cooperation is imperative in assisting developing countries to effectively address issues of road safety. The availability of adequate financial resources, technical assistance, capacity-building, the sharing of best practices and advocacy are crucial in that regard. While we are encouraged by the increase in funding reported in the WHO report, including through private sector and civil society involvement, we agree with the report's assessment that levels of funding for road safety are still not commensurate with the scale of the problem and that increased efforts must be made to secure additional financial support for road safety projects. However, we would caution against setting universal standards based on what may have been developed in one region, and stress that specific circumstances in various parts of the world must be taken into account in addressing road safety.

We strongly support the intent to increase cooperation at the national, regional and global levels to achieve the objectives of road safety as part of the

Decade of Action for Road Safety. We also look forward to a concrete plan of action that takes into account the needs of developing countries for adequate support to build capacities in this area so as to implement the objectives by the end of the decade.

Ms. Rovirosa (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to thank the delegation of the Russian Federation for its leadership and its constructive and flexible spirit in the negotiations on draft resolution A/64/L.44/Rev.1*, which it introduced to the General Assembly today.

For our country, improving road safety throughout the world is a significant matter, since Mexico is no stranger to this problem. We need only point out that we are in third place in the Americas after the United States and Brazil in terms of the number of deaths caused by road accidents. Figures indicate that there are between 17,000 and 24,000 deaths a year in my country due to the lack of road safety.

Based on the concern generated by these indicators, two years ago we created the Mexican Road Safety Initiative, the main objective of which is to promote strategies and action in all spheres — public, social and private — in order to reduce the number of accidents, injuries, deaths and disabilities caused by motor vehicle accidents. The Mexican Road Safety Initiative has three main aspects. First, it takes a comprehensive approach based on epidemiology and public health. Secondly, it is based on scientific evidence. Thirdly, it is based on a multisectoral perspective.

At the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, held in Moscow in November 2009, our country introduced this Initiative as a common good that could be shared by others and used as a model for the entire Mesoamerican region, whereby it would be called the Mesoamerican Road Safety Initiative. Through the Initiative, the Government of Mexico has pledged to devote resources to research, communication, education and training, among other areas.

We note that, in the context of actions in support of promoting the Decade of Action for Road Safety, which is taken up in the draft resolution to be adopted today, our country will be the host of two international events. The first is the Third Latin America and Caribbean Forum Road Safety Stakeholders Forum, to be held in October, and the second is the Second Ibero-American Encounter on Road Safety, which will take place in March 2011.

Mexico's commitment to addressing this problem has also been reflected in our participation in the Group of Friends of the Decade of Action for Road Safety. We have therefore co-sponsored the draft resolution on improving road safety throughout the world. Mexico believes that the Decade will help to ensure that our countries can correct underreporting and improve road safety data information systems. The main challenge for our country and for others will be to strengthen a structure of multisectoral work at the national level that is also operational at the state and municipal level.

The Acting President: In accordance with resolution 49/2 of 19 October 1994, I now call on the observer of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Mr. Schmale (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies): I am grateful for this opportunity to deliver a brief statement on behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

In 1998, we issued the *World Disasters Report*, highlighting road safety as a key issue requiring attention. Since then, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has become increasingly concerned about the rapid escalation of the global road safety crisis that now kills 3,000 people every day and injures 50 times as many. We know that urgent action is required to reverse the growing crisis, which disproportionately affects young people, particularly in low- and middle-income countries.

We also know that the deadly road crash crisis is different from other crises in that it is neither a natural disaster nor a war. There are no enemies in road safety. It is entirely human-made and is all the more shocking for being so. What makes the road crash crisis particularly horrific is that these deaths and injuries are entirely preventable. This crisis is also characterized by the fact that there is little international funding to help address it.

However, we are encouraged by the growing international response and alignment that have taken place over the past 10 years. We welcomed the publication of the seminal *World Report on Road*

Traffic Injury Prevention. The members of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration have produced a series of good practice manuals that address the key road safety risks. Civil society, business and Government partnership action are increasingly using these manuals very concretely to make a real change. These actions show that it is possible to share proven cost-effective solutions across the globe, with significant results.

We welcome these actions, and at the same time we recognize that together we must do much, much more to transform these small beginnings into a global wave of positive and effective change.

National Red Cross and Red Crescent societies are already part of the increasing global response. Active and committed in the field of road safety, many are mobilizing decision-makers, creating awareness among young people and the wider public and providing first aid services and training, often integrating road safety in their first aid programmes.

The International Federation has integrated road safety as a priority into its strategic direction for the next 10 years. We work closely with the Global Road Safety Partnership — a partnership among Governments, governmental agencies, the private sector and civil society organizations, whose secretariat we host in Geneva. We and our member Red Cross and Red Crescent societies are ready to do more and to do better together with Governments, the private sector, civil society, communities and international organizations.

The International Federation is proud that national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies are mentioned in the operative section of this year's draft resolution on improving global road safety (A/64/L.44/Rev.1*), and we are committed to acting upon it. We welcome the draft resolution and the coming Decade of Action for Road Safety, and we are determined to implement activities in support of the Decade.

In conclusion, the road crash crisis concerns us all. We must act without delay, first to prevent today's deadly trend from worsening, and then to reverse it. Our vision is a world free of road crash death and injury. The choice to move towards this vision is ours, collectively and individually. I can guarantee the Assembly that the International Federation and its member Red Cross and Red Crescent societies will play their role fully in the coming Decade of Action for Road Safety. It is a matter of life and death. It is time for all of us to act.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/64/L.44/Rev.1*, entitled "Improving global road safety", which has been reissued for technical reasons.

I should like to announce that since the publication of draft resolution A/64/L.44/Rev.1*, the following countries have become sponsors: Albania, Algeria, Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Cape Verde, Croatia, the Czech Republic, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Grenada, Haiti, Iraq, Ireland, Japan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Malta, Mauritius, Monaco, Montenegro, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Slovakia, Spain, the Sudan, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates and the United States of America.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.44/Rev.1*?

Draft resolution A/64/L.44/Rev.1 was adopted* (resolution 64/255).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 46?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 125

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization

Draft resolution (A/64/L.45)

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.45.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): It is an honour for me to speak on behalf of the States members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO): the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Belarus, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The Collective Security Treaty Organization has enjoyed observer status in the General Assembly since 2004. In that time, the CSTO secretariat has established contact with the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate.

The emerging mechanism of CSTO peacekeeping activities facilitates the utilization of its capacities in peacekeeping operations, including under United Nations auspices. The goals of the CSTO, which became a regional international organization with the entry into force of its charter on 18 September 2003 and its registration with the United Nations Secretariat on 16 December of the same year, are the strengthening of peace and international and regional stability and the collective protection of the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of its member States.

To achieve those goals, CSTO member States give pride of place to political means, in accordance with the United Nations Charter. The outcomes of CSTO activities are proof of its true potential to cooperate with the United Nations on the basis of partnership and mutually reinforcing efforts. Given the increasing importance of combating emerging challenges and the significance accorded by the United Nations to developing comprehensive cooperation with regional organizations, the adoption of a draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Collective Security Treaty Organization is now on our agenda.

We are grateful to all States that participated in preparing draft resolution A/64/L.45. Its adoption by consensus will help to further boost wide-ranging cooperation between the two organizations.

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/64/L.45.

I should like to announce that since draft resolution A/64/L.45 was submitted, Papua New Guinea has become a sponsor.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.45?

Draft resolution A/64/L.45 was adopted (resolution 64/256).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 125?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 126

Sixty-fifth anniversary of the end of the Second World War

Draft resolution (A/64/L.46)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.46.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): On its own behalf and that of the 53 sponsors from all regions of the world, the Russian delegation is honoured to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/64/L.46, entitled "Sixty-fifth anniversary of the end of the Second World War". We note that since the draft resolution was submitted to the Secretariat, the following countries have joined the list of sponsors, in addition to those already listed in the distributed text: Australia, Benin, Cambodia, the Congo, Egypt, France, India, Iraq, Israel, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Malta, Montenegro, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Somalia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Zambia.

This year, we will celebrate an important date: the sixty-fifth anniversary of the victory in the Second World War. We are not only entitled, but also obliged to be proud of that common victory. Tens of millions of people gave their lives for the ideals of humanism and fairness to prevail. The aspiration to free humanity from the scourge of war forever served as the basis for the establishment of the United Nations, whose Charter became a code of conduct for States and international organizations and the commonly recognized basis for the formation of a new world order and the current system of international law.

Establishing the anti-Hitler coalition was certainly an unprecedented example of States with different ideologies and political systems uniting before a common threat to all humanity. As Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has underscored, "its participants succeeded in overcoming their differences in favour of a most critical undertaking". That is why the victory in the Second World War is particularly important today, when the international community

must pool its efforts in the face of global challenges and threats, such as international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and transnational organized crime. Our fathers and grandfathers have shown us that such unity is possible. Now, it is our duty to follow in their footsteps.

However, we must not forget that that war was a great tragedy for the people of Europe and the world. Today, it is important to remember the lessons of the Second World War, to enshrine the memory of those who died and to help preserve national historical remembrance. This is our common history, and these events, as we said, led to the creation of the United Nations. We are convinced that caring about our past and commemorating historical truths will be a unifying and consolidating factor in helping the international community to move forward.

Paragraph 2 of the draft resolution requests the President of the General Assembly to hold a special solemn meeting of the General Assembly in the second week of May 2010 in commemoration of all victims of the war. The Russian Federation would like to propose that the meeting be held on 6 May.

Mr. Oyarzun (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

We will soon commemorate the sixty-fifth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, a tragic chapter in the history of Europe and the entire world. The draft resolution before us today (A/64/L.46) is a most fitting way to mark this occasion, as was the resolution on the sixtieth anniversary, which the European Union also supported.

We must never forget the horrors of the past and the cruelty of war so as not to repeat them. We have the responsibility of ensuring that crimes against humanity and war crimes never recur. We must also remember the sacrifices made and mourn the lives that were lost in the war, the Holocaust, occupations and acts of repression. We believe that an awareness of history helps to prevent the recurrence of similar crimes.

The United Nations was conceived in order to preserve international peace and security. In its very preamble, the Charter states that "We the peoples of the United Nations" are

> "determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind".

We must overcome the legacies of war and build on the progress made since the end of the Second World War in promoting democratic values, human rights and fundamental freedoms. With regard to its commemoration, we must pay tribute to all those who fought for liberty and peace. They should inspire us to look to the future with hope and to redouble our efforts for peace and understanding. We Members of the United Nations must today play this crucial role together.

We are very conscious of the fact that it is not just the two World Wars that have brought untold sorrow to humankind over the past 100 years. Too often, our efforts for peace have failed. The European Union, which was itself born from the ashes of conflict, is firmly committed to working with the other Members of the United Nations to put an end to this scourge and create a more peaceful, just and prosperous world for future generations. We believe that an honest and thorough debate on history will enable us to move towards reconciliation on the basis of truth and remembrance.

We welcome the draft resolution presented by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, and we thank him warmly for his work. The draft resolution preserves the memory of the victims of one of the darkest episodes of our history.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take action on draft resolution A/64/L.46. In addition to those new sponsors mentioned by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, I would like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, the following countries have become sponsors: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Belgium, the Czech Republic, El Salvador, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Slovakia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.46?

Draft resolution A/64/L.46 was adopted (resolution 64/257).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 126.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.

United Nations A/64/PV.75

General Assembly
Sixty-fourth session

Official Records

75th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 16 March 2010, 11 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Hackett (Barbados), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.

Agenda item 136 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/64/631/Add.6 and Add.7)

The Acting President: I should like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to documents A/64/631/Add.6 and Add.7, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communications contained in documents A/64/631 and addenda 1 through 5, the Dominican Republic and the Marshall Islands have made the necessary payments to reduce their arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter. May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in those documents?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 63 (*continued*)

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(a) **New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support**

Draft resolution (A/64/L.38/Rev.1)

The Acting President: Members will recall that the General Assembly held the debate on agenda item 63 and its sub-items (a) and (b) jointly with agenda item 47, at its 22nd to 24th plenary meetings, on 20 and 21 October 2009.

I now give the floor to the representative of Yemen to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.38/Rev.1.

Mr. Alsoswa (Yemen): On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/64/L.38/Rev.1, entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support".

I am pleased to report that we have reached consensus on the draft resolution. I would therefore like to thank all groups for their constructive engagement in the negotiating process. I would also like to thank the facilitator, Mr. Nor Eddine Benfreha of Algeria, as well as the groups' coordinators, for their tireless and continuous efforts, which enabled us to reach consensus.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/64/L.38/Rev.1. I should like to announce that, since the publication of the draft resolution, Croatia, Estonia, Ireland, Israel and Slovenia have become sponsors.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/64/L.38/Rev.1?

Draft resolution A/64/L.38/Rev.1 was adopted (resolution 64/258).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 63, and of agenda item 63 as a whole?

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It was so decided.

Agenda item 7 (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation items

The Acting President: In order to enable the General Assembly to consider the report of the Fifth Committee, it will be necessary to reopen our consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to reopen its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I further take it that the Assembly agrees to proceed immediately to the consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 112 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(a) Appointment of members of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/64/524/Add.1)

The Acting President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Fifth Committee that is before it today.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Before we begin to take action on the recommendation contained in the report of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee.

The Fifth Committee recommends in paragraph 3 of its report that the General Assembly appoint Anupam Ray of India as a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a term of office beginning today, 16 March 2010, and ending on 31 December 2010.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to appoint Anupam Ray of India as a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for a term of office beginning today, 16 March 2010, and ending on 31 December 2010?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.